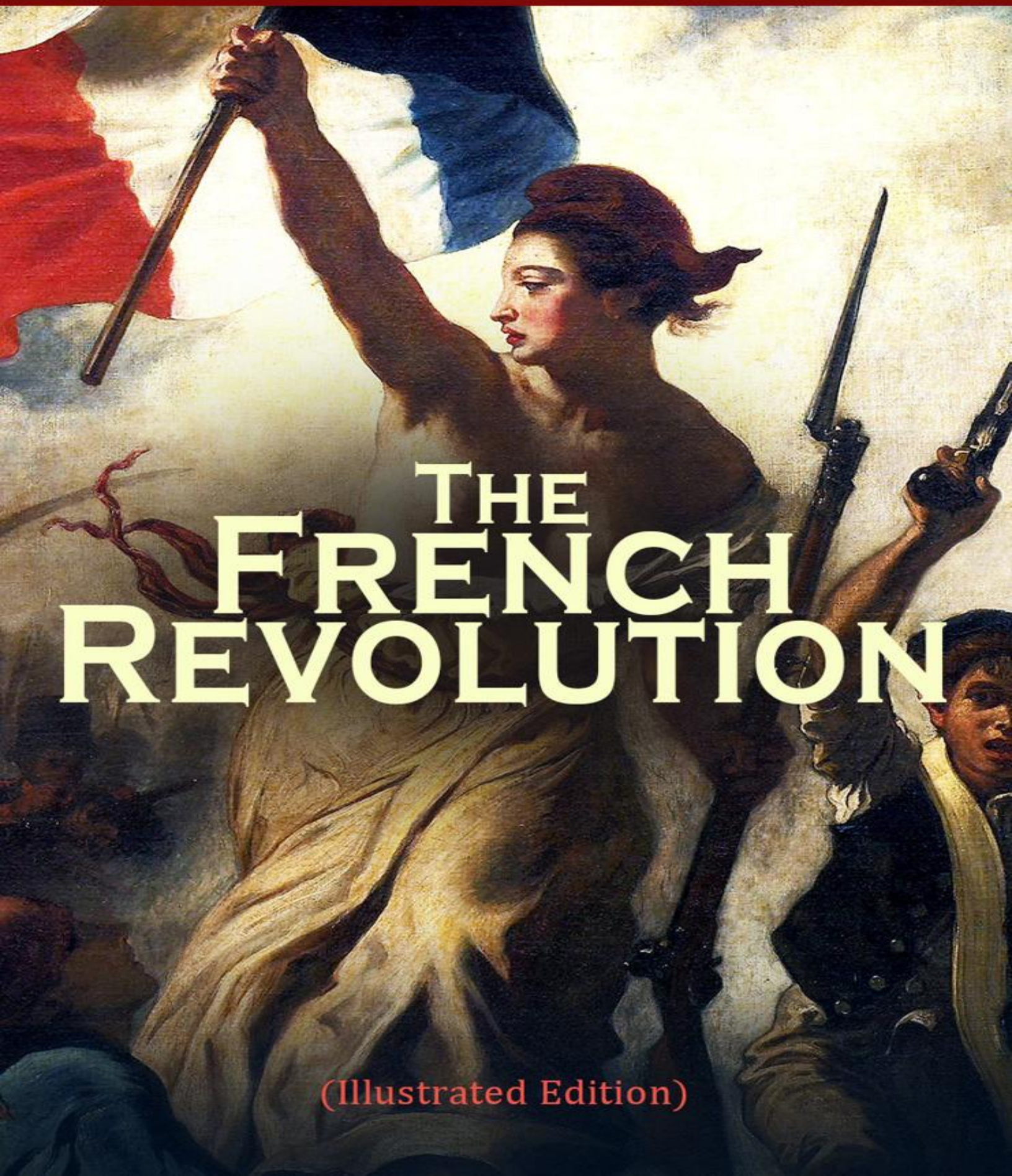
John Stevens Cabot Abbott



The French Revolution

(Illustrated Edition)

John Stevens Cabot Abbott

The French Revolution (Illustrated Edition)

Including the History of the French Monarchy

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MARIE ANTOINETTE.

Chapter I.
Origin of the French Monarchy

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Could one have occupied some stand-point in the clouds fifty years before the birth of our Savior, and have looked down upon that portion of ancient Gaul which has since been called France, he would have seen an immense undulating plain about six hundred and fifty miles square, bounded on the north by the Rhine, on the east by the craggy cliffs of the Alps, on the south by the almost impassable barriers of the Pyrenees, and on the west by the ocean. This beautiful realm, most admirably adapted in its physical features, its climate, and its soil to be inhabited by man, was then mostly covered with forest. Vast rivers, with their innumerable branches flowing in every direction, beautified the landscape and rendered the soil exuberantly fertile. About twenty millions of people, divided into more than a hundred independent tribes, inhabited this fair land. Life was with them all a scene of constant battle. They ever lived with weapons of war in their hands, seeking to encroach upon the rights of others or to repel those who were crowding upon them.

In this state of affairs imperial Rome cast a glance over the Alps upon Gaul, and resolved upon its conquest and annexation to the empire. Julius Cæsar, at the head of forty thousand men, descended through the defiles of the mountains and entered Gaul between the Lake of Geneva and Mount Jura. After a series of campaigns extending through ten years, and after

sweeping with his invincible legions nearly two millions of men from his path, he succeeded in the entire subjugation of the country. Roman governors were appointed over the several provinces, and fortresses were reared and garrisoned by twelve hundred Roman soldiers, who enforced the laws of the empire. The arts, the civilization, and the refinements of Rome were gradually extended over the semi-barbaric Gauls, and for nearly four hundred years the country enjoyed general peace and prosperity. The southern portion of the province became distinguished for its schools, its commerce, and its elegance.

Toward the close of the third century the Roman Empire, enervated by luxury and vice, was visibly on the decline. Then commenced that mighty flood of invasion from the north which finally overran the whole of southern Europe, sweeping before it almost every vestige of the power and grandeur of the Cæsars. Army after army of skin-clad warriors, in aspect savage as wolves and equally merciless, crossed the Rhine, and in fierce and interminable battle fought their way over the plains of Gaul. For nearly four hundred years barbarian hordes from the shores of the North Sea, from the steppes of Tartary, even from far-off China, were pouring down upon southern Europe. Those in the rear crowded forward those in the advance. These clannish tribes, every where victorious, were slow to amalgamate. Each retained its distinctive laws, language, customs, and manners. For more than two centuries this cruel war continued, and all Gaul presented but a scene of tumult, terror, and carnage.

Among the marshes of the Lower Rhine there dwelt a fierce tribe called Franks, or Freemen. Early in the fifth century, Pharamond, the sovereign chief of this tribe, a man of extraordinary energy and sagacity, formed a confederacy with several other adjacent tribes, crossed the Rhine at various points, and after a series of terrific conflicts, which were protracted through many years, overpowered the Gauls under their Roman leaders, and took possession of the country nearly as far as the River Somme. Being the leading chief of the confederated tribes, he exerted a kind of supremacy over the rest, which may perhaps be considered as the first dawning of the French monarchy. The successors of Pharamond retained his conquests, and gradually extended their dominions until they were in possession of all the country between the Rhine and the Loire.

In the year 480 Clovis succeeded to the chieftainship of the confederation. Ambitious, unscrupulous, and energetic, he pushed his invading armies toward the Pyrenees, and for thirty years nearly all the south of France was a volcano of smoke and flame. His march, though attended with many reverses, was triumphant, and at the close of his career in the year 511 nearly all Gaul was partially subjected to his sway.

Christianity had previously entered Gaul from Rome. Clovis married Clotilda, the daughter of a Christian bishop. In the heat of one of his battles, as the tide of victory was setting against him, Clovis, raising his hands and eyes to heaven, exclaimed,

> "O God of Clotilda! if thou wilt interpose and grant me this victory, I will renounce idols forever and become a Christian."

He gained the victory, and on the next Christmas-day Clovis was baptized. But a man more thoroughly wicked never played the hypocrite. By treachery the most loathsome, he caused all the chiefs to be assassinated who could be regarded in the least degree as his rivals, and, placing chiefs subject to his will at the head of all the different tribes, he attained such a supremacy as has led historians to speak of Clovis as the first monarch of the conquered realm. The dynasty thus established has been called the Merovingian, from Merovius, the grandfather of Clovis. From this successful invasion of the Franks all Gaul received the name of France. The leaders of these victorious bands occasionally had general assemblies, held in the open air, to deliberate respecting important movements. These meetings were very large, as all the chiefs and sub-chiefs came in battle array, surrounded by an ostentatious and well-armed retinue. As these assemblies were usually held in the month of March they received the name of Fields of March, *Champs de Mars*. The interests of the confederation rendered it not unfrequently necessary that these assemblies should be convened. This was the origin of the States General of France, which, twelve centuries later, opened the drama of that terrible revolution, which is universally regarded as the most awful tragedy of time.

An incident which occurred during one of these assemblies held by Clovis interestingly illustrates the character of that barbaric chief and the

state of the times. A silver vase was included in the plunder taken from the church of Rheims after the conquest of that city. The plunder was divided at Soissons. The bishop of the church earnestly solicited that the vase might be restored to him. Clovis advocated the wishes of the bishop. One of the Frank warriors, jealous of his chief's interference, with one blow of his battle-axe crushed the vase, sternly declaring that Clovis was entitled to his share of the plunder and to no more. The chieftain, though glowing with rage, ventured not to utter a word.

At the next review of his troops, Clovis, approaching the soldier, took his weapon as if to inspect it. Pronouncing it to be unfit for use, he threw it disdainfully upon the ground. As the soldier stooped to pick it up, Clovis with one blow of his battle-axe crushed his skull, exclaiming, "Thus didst thou strike the vase at Soissons."[5]

The monarchy, thus established by usurpation, treachery, and blood, was very precarious and shadowy in its power. There was no acknowledged metropolis, no centralization of authority, no common laws. The whole country was occupied by the various tribes of invaders, each, under its own local chiefs, claiming independence, governed by its own customs, and holding the province upon which it chanced to have taken possession. Thus the supremacy of Clovis was neither precisely defined nor boldly claimed.

When Cæsar, five hundred years before the rise of Clovis, invaded Gaul, he found a tribe, called the Parisii, dwelling upon the banks of the Seine, with their principal village—which consisted of a few barbarian huts of mud, with straw roofs, and without chimneys—upon a small island embraced by the river. From the name of the tribe the village itself was subsequently called Paris. Such was the origin of that world-renowned metropolis which for ages has been the focal point of literature, science, art, and bloody revolutions. During the sway of the Romans the city had increased very considerably in population and importance, and Clovis selected it as his capital.

For about three hundred years the successors of Clovis maintained their supremacy. During all this period there was a constant conflict between the king and the heads of the other tribes, or the nobles as they gradually began to be called. An energetic monarch would occasionally

arise and grasp extended power. But he would perhaps be succeeded by a feeble ruler, and the nobles would again rally and make vigorous encroachments upon the royal assumptions. The only contest, however, was between the king and the nobles. The mass of the people were in abject servitude, with no recognized rights.

In the year 732 the Moors, who had crossed the sea from Africa and had overrun Spain, began to crowd down in battle array through the defiles of the Pyrenees upon the plains of France. A successful general, Charles *Martel* (the hammer), so called from the tremendous blows he dealt the enemy, met them and drove them back with prodigious slaughter. By his achievements he acquired immense popularity and renown. As a very feeble prince then occupied the throne, Charles Martel collected the reins of power into his own hands, and, though nominally but an illustrious general, became in reality the ruler of France. Satisfied with the possession of power he was not ambitious of the kingly title, or thought it not prudent to grasp at too much at once.

At the death of Charles Martel, his son Pepin, a man of great energy and ambition, drove the imbecile king, Childeric III., into a cloister, and took his seat unresisted upon the throne. The dynasty thus established is called the Carlovingian, from Charlemagne, the most illustrious of this line of kings. The nation cordially approved of the act. As Pepin could not claim the throne by right of hereditary descent, he founded his title to reign upon the regal power which his father had in *reality* exercised, and upon the well-known assent of the nation. To confirm his authority still more, he appealed to the Pope. The Church was now in the plenitude of its power; and the Pope, grateful for the service which Charles Martel had rendered the Church by driving back the infidels, with alacrity consented to establish Pepin upon the throne by the august rites of religion.

Pepin, as his leading warriors had now become horsemen, changed the time of the general assemblies from the month of March to May, as the latter month was more convenient for forage, and the Assembly hence received the name of Fields of May, *Champs de Mai*. At these meetings the king presided, and the body was composed of the higher clergy and the nobility. Occasionally, a small delegation of the most distinguished of the people, who were called the Third Estate, *Tiers Etat*, had been admitted. Pepin called together only the clergy and the nobility, declining to admit

the Third Estate to the Assembly. Subsequently some kings admitted the Third Estate, and others excluded them, according to their caprice. Questions relating to war, peace, and the enactment of general laws were submitted to this body, and decided by the majority. The chiefs only could speak. The assembled warriors clamorously and with clashing of arms expressed assent or dissent.

The world-renowned Charlemagne, succeeding his father Pepin, ascended the throne in the year 768. France at that time presented every where an aspect of decay and wild disorder. This monarch, illustrious both as a warrior and a statesman, fused the heterogeneous and warring tribes into a compact nation. Still, the mass, though consolidated, was conglomerate, its component parts distinctly defined. All France bowed submissive to his sway. Like a whirlwind he traversed Spain with his armies. Italy speedily acknowledged his supremacy. The vast empire of Charlemagne soon vied with that of ancient Rome, embracing nearly the whole of Europe.

It was an important point in the policy of Charlemagne to humble the nobles. He wished to surround his throne with an aristocracy enjoying privilege and splendor, but deprived of all political power. He wished himself to appoint the rulers of the provinces, and not to allow those offices to be hereditary with the counts and the dukes. Therefore he endeavored to ally the *people* with himself in resisting the powerful barons. He also, with the same object in view, sedulously courted the affections of the Church, conferring many of the most important offices of the state upon the high ecclesiastics.

Charlemagne ordered the Assembly to meet twice every year. Every count was commanded to bring to this congress thirteen of the most influential of the people within his jurisdiction. They usually met in two bodies, the ecclesiastical leaders in one spot, the military in another. Sometimes, by order of the king, they both met together. The king held his court at a little distance, and by messengers received constant reports from the two bodies. Weighing the result of their deliberations, he issued his decree, which all recognized as law. Such was the germ of deliberative assemblies in France.

Charlemagne established several schools. In these he assembled for severe study many of the young men of the empire, selecting the low-born

as well as the sons of the nobles. As he was very desirous that his reign should be embellished by the attainments of men of letters, he frequently examined these schools himself. One of the historians of those days writes:

> "When, after a long absence, Charlemagne returned to Gaul, he ordered the children to be brought to him, to show him their exercises and verses. Those belonging to the lower classes exhibited works beyond all hope, but those of noble descent had only trifles to show. The wise monarch, imitating the Eternal Judge, placed those who had done well on his right hand, and thus addressed them:
>
> "'A thousand thanks, my sons, for your diligence in laboring according to my orders and for your own good. Proceed. Endeavor to perfect yourselves, and I will reward you with magnificent bishoprics and abbeys, and you shall be ever honorable in my sight.'
>
> "Then he bent an angry countenance upon those on his left hand, and, troubling their consciences with a lightning look, with bitter irony, and thundering rather than speaking, he burst upon them with this terrible apostrophe:
>
> "'But for you, nobles, you sons of the great—delicate and pretty minions as you are, proud of your birth and your riches—you have neglected my orders and your own glory, and the study of letters, and have given yourselves up to ease, sports, and idleness.'
>
> "After this preamble, raising on high his august head and his invincible arm, he fulminated his usual oath:
>
> "'By the King of Heaven I care little for your nobility and beauty, however others may admire you. You may hold it for certain that, if you do not make amends for your past

> negligence by vigilant zeal, you will never obtain any thing from Charles.'"[6]

Wherever Charlemagne led his legions, he baptized the vanquished; and the conquered tribes and nations called themselves Christians. The ignorant barbarians eagerly accepted the sacrament for the sake of the white baptismal robe which was given to each proselyte.

The vast empire of Charlemagne under his effeminate successors rapidly crumbled to pieces. In ceaseless conflicts and fluctuations the chiefs of the tribes, or nobles, gradually regained the power which had been wrested from them by Charlemagne. Upon the ruins of the empire arose the feudal system, and France became a monarchy but in name. The throne, shorn of its energies, retained but the shadow of power. Haughty dukes, surrounded by their warlike retainers, and impregnable in massive castles which had been the work of ages, exercised over their own vassals all the prerogatives of royalty, and often eclipsed the monarch in wealth and splendor. The power of the duke became so absolute over the serfs who tilled his acres, and who timidly huddled for protection beneath the ramparts of the castle, that, in the language of the feudal code, the duke "might take all they had, alive or dead, and imprison them when he pleased, being accountable to none but God."

France again became but a conglomeration of independent provinces, with scarcely any bond of union. The whole landscape was dotted with castles strongly built upon the river's bluff, or upon the craggy hill. These baronial fortresses, massive and sombre, were flanked by towers pierced with loop-holes and fortified with battlements. A ditch often encircled the walls, and an immense portcullis or suspended gate could at any moment be let down, to exclude all entrance. The apartments were small and comfortless, with narrow and grated windows. There was one large banqueting-hall, the seat of baronial splendor, where the lord met his retainers and vassals in intercourse in which aristocratic supremacy and democratic equality were most strangely blended. Every knight swore fealty to the baron, the baron to the duke, the duke to the king. The sovereign could claim military service from his vassals, but could exercise no power over their serfs, either legislative or judicial. It not unfrequently

happened that some duke had a larger retinue and a richer income than the king himself.

A poor knight implored of the Count of Champagne a marriage-portion for his daughter. A wealthy citizen who chanced to be present said, "My lord has already given away so much that he has nothing left." "You do not speak the truth," said the count, "since I have got yourself;" and he immediately delivered him up to the knight, who seized him by the collar, and would not liberate him until he had paid a ransom of twenty-five hundred dollars. A French knight relates this story as an instance of the count's generosity.

These lords were often highway robbers. Scouts traversed the country, and armed men who filled their castles watched for travelers. The rich merchant who chanced to fall into their hands was not only despoiled of all his goods, but was often thrown into a dungeon, and even tortured until he purchased his ransom at a price commensurate with his ability.

Under this feudal sway the eldest son was the sole possessor. "As for the younger children," exclaims Michelet, with indignant sarcasm, "theirs is a vast inheritance! They have no less than all the highways, and over and above, all that is under the vault of heaven. Their bed is the threshold of their father's house, from which, shivering and ahungered, they can look upon their elder brother sitting alone by the hearth where they too have sat in the happy days of their childhood, and perhaps he will order a few morsels to be flung to them notwithstanding the dogs do growl. 'Down, dogs, down, they are my brothers! they must have something as well as you.'"

The Church was the only asylum for the younger sons of these great families. In her bosom ambitious ecclesiastics, as bishops, archbishops, and cardinals, often attained a degree of splendor and of authority which the baron, the count, or the duke in vain strove to emulate. The unmarried daughters took refuge in the monasteries, or were shut up, in seclusion which was virtual imprisonment, in the corners of the old chateaux. Thus the convents, those castles of the Church, were reared and supported mainly to provide for the privileged class. The peasant in the furrow looked with equal dread upon the bishop and the baron, and regarded them equally as his oppressors.

These proud bishops assumed the character and the haughty air of feudal lords. They scorned to ride upon the lowly mule, but vaulted upon the back of the charger neighing for the battle. They were ever ready for a fray, and could strike as sturdy blows as ever came from the battle-axe of a knight. The vows of celibacy were entirely disregarded. Some took wives; others openly kept concubines. These younger sons of the nobles, dressed in the garb of the Church, were found to be such dangerous characters that there was a general demand that they should be married. "Laymen are so convinced," says one of the ancient writers, "that none ought to be unmarried, that in most parishes they will not abide a priest except he have a concubine." The lords spiritual endeavored to fashion the Church upon the model of the feudal system. Abbeys and bishoprics, with all their rich endowments, passed by descent to the children of the bishops.[7]

An incident which occurred in the year 911 throws much light upon the rudeness of those barbaric times. Rollo, the chieftain of a band of Norman pirates, entered the Seine, committing fearful ravages. Charles IV., appropriately called Charles the Simple, alarmed by his progress and unable to raise a force sufficient to check him, sent an archbishop to offer him the possession of Normandy, with the title of hereditary duke, if he would peaceably take possession of this territory and swear allegiance to the king. Rollo eagerly accepted the magnificent offer. In performing the ceremony of swearing fealty, it was necessary, according to custom, for Rollo to prostrate himself before the king and kiss his feet. The haughty Norman, when called upon to perform the ceremony, indignantly drew himself up, exclaiming,

> "Never, never will I kiss the foot or bow the knee to mortal man."

After some delay it was decided that the act of homage should be performed by proxy, and Rollo ordered one of his stalwart soldiers to press his lip upon the foot of the king. The burly barbarian strode forward, as if in obedience to the command, and, seizing the foot of the monarch, raised it high above his head, and threw the monarch prostrate upon the floor. The Norman soldiers filled the hall with derisive shouts of laughter, while

the king and his courtiers, intimidated by barbarians so fierce and defiant, prudently concealed their chagrin.

The Carlovingian dynasty held the throne for two hundred and thirty-five years. Louis V., the last of this race, died in 987. He was called, from his indolence and imbecility, the Idler. As he sank into an inglorious grave, an energetic and powerful noble, Hugh Capet, Duke of the Isle of France, with vigorous arm thrust the hereditary claimant into a prison and ascended the throne. Thus was established the third dynasty, called the Capetian.

For two hundred and fifty years under the Capets, France could hardly be called a kingdom. Though the name of king remained, the kingly authority was extinct. The history of France during this period is but a history of the independent feudal lords, each of whom held his court in his own castle. None of these kings had power to combine the heterogeneous and discordant elements. The fragile unity of the realm was broken by differences of race, of customs, of language, and of laws. But in this apparent chaos there was one bond of union, the Church, which exerted an almost miraculous sway over these uncultivated and warlike men. The ecclesiastics were strongly in favor of the Capets, and were highly instrumental in placing them upon the throne.

With the Capets commenced a royal line which, in its different branches, running through the houses of Valois and of Bourbon, retained the throne for eight hundred years, until the fall of Louis XVI. in 1793.

About the year 1100 we begin to hear the first faint murmurs of the people. Some bold minds ventured the suggestion that a man ought to be free to dispose of the produce of his own labor, to marry his children without the consent of another, to go and come, sell and buy without restriction. Indeed, in Normandy the peasants broke out in a revolt. But steel-clad knights, in sweeping squadrons, cut them down mercilessly and trampled them beneath iron hoofs. The most illustrious of the complainants were seized and hung to the trees, as a warning to all murmurers. The people were thus taught that trees made good gibbets. When their turn came they availed themselves of this knowledge.

In the year 1294 Philip the Fair established a court in Paris called the Parliament. This was purely an aristocratic body, and was, in general, entirely subservient to the king's wishes. Similar parliaments were

established by the great feudal princes in their provinces. There were occasional contentions between the parliaments and the king, but the king usually succeeded in compelling them to obedience. The Parliament enjoyed only the privilege of registering the royal edicts. In the reign of Louis XIV. the Parliament ventured to express a little objection to one of the tyrannical ordinances of the monarch.

The boy-king, eighteen years of age, was astounded at such impudence. He left the chase, and, hastening to the hall, entered it whip in hand. He could send them one and all to the Bastille or the block, and they knew it, and he knew it. The presence of the king brought them to terms, and they immediately became as submissive as fawning spaniels.

FOOTNOTES:

5. Greg. Tur., book ii., c. 28.

6. Monach. Sangall, b. i., c. ii., sqq., as quoted by Michelet.

7. See the abundant proof of these statements in Michelet's History of France, p. 193.

Chapter II.
The Houses of Valois and Bourbon

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The House of Valois.—Luxury of the Court and the Nobles.—Insurrection.—Jaques Bonhomme.—Henry III.—Henry IV., of Navarre.—Cardinal Richelieu.—French Academy.—Regency of Anne of Austria.—Palaces of France.—The Noble and the Ennobled.—Persecution of the Protestants.—Edict of Nantes.—Its Revocation.—Distress of the Protestants.—Death of Louis XIV.

In the year 1328 the direct line of the Capets became extinct by the death of Charles IV., who left no male descendant. The nobles, assembled in parliament at Paris, assigned the crown to Philip, Count of Valois, a nephew of the former king. He was crowned at Rheims, in May, 1328, as Philip VI. The nobles, having thus obtained a king according to their wishes, complained to him that they had borrowed large sums of money from wealthy merchants and artisans, which it was inconvenient for them to pay, and that it was not consistent with the dignity of the French nobility that they should be harassed by debts due to the low-born. The king promptly issued a decree that all these debts should be cut down one fourth, that four months grace should be allowed without interest, and then, that these plebeian creditors might be reduced to a proper state of humility, he ordered them all to be imprisoned and their property to be confiscated. The merciless monarch doubled the taxes upon the people, and created a court at Paris of such magnificence that the baronial lords abandoned their castles and crowded to the metropolis to share its voluptuous indulgences. Even neighboring kings, attracted by the splendor of the Parisian court, took up their abode in Paris. The nobles needed vast sums of money to sustain them in such measureless extravagance. They accordingly left stern overseers over their estates, to drive the peasants to their toil and to extort from them every possible farthing.

The king, to replenish his ever-exhausted purse, assumed the sole right of making and selling salt throughout the realm. Each family, always excepting the nobles, who were then exempted from every species of tax, was required to take a certain quantity at an exorbitant price.

Vincennes was then the great banqueting-hall of Europe. In its present decay it exhibits but little of the grandeur it presented four hundred years ago, when its battlements towered above the forest of oaks, centuries old, which surrounded the castle—when plumed and blazoned squadrons met in jousts and tournaments, and when, in meteoric splendor, hunting bands of lords and ladies swept the park. Brilliant as was this spectacle, no healthy mind can contemplate it but with indignation. To support this luxury of a few thousand nobles, thirty millions of people were plunged into the extreme of ignorance, poverty, and misery.

Again the king and the nobles had empty purses, and were greatly in debt. By an arbitrary decree all the coin of the kingdom was called in. It was then passed through the mint greatly debased. With this debased coin the debts were paid, and *then* an order was issued that the coin should be regarded at its depreciated value.

With the lapse of centuries intelligence had gradually increased, and there was now quite a growing middling class between the peasants and the nobles—artisans, merchants, manufacturers, and literary and professional men. These outrages had at length become intolerable. Human nature could endure no more. This middle class became the leaders of the blind and maddened masses, and hurled them in fury upon their foes. The conspiracy spread over the kingdom, and in all the towns and throughout the country the signal for revolt was simultaneously given. It was a servile insurrection, accompanied by all the horrors inevitable to such a warfare. The debased populace, but little elevated above the brute, were as merciless as the hyena or the wolf. Phrensied with rage and despair, in howling bands they burst upon the castles, and the wrongs of centuries were terrifically avenged. We need not tell the story. Violence, torture, flame, and blood exhausted their energies. Mothers and maidens suffered all that mortals can endure in terror, brutal indignities, shame, and woe. In war even the refined and courteous often become diabolical; but those who have been degraded by ages of ignorance and oppression, when they first break their fetters, generally become fiends incarnate.

The nobles so thoroughly despised the peasants that they had not dreamed that the starving, cringing boors would dare even to think of emerging from their mud hovels to approach the lordly castle of rock, with its turrets and battlements and warlike defenders. The sheep might as well conspire against the dogs and the wolves. The peasant had hardly individuality enough even to receive a name. He was familiarly called Jack Goodman, *Jacques Bonhomme*. This insurrection of the Jacks, or of the Jacquerie as it is usually called, was, after much devastation and bloodshed, quelled. Barbaric phrensy can seldom long hold out against disciplined valor. One half of the population of France fell a prey to the sword, or to the pestilence and famine which ensued.

This was the first convulsive movement made by the *people*. Defeated though they were, and with their fetters riveted anew, they obtained new ideas of power and right which they never forgot. Already we begin to hear many of the phrases which four hundred years later were upon all lips, when the monarchy and the feudal aristocracy were buried in one common grave.

The house of Valois retained the throne for two hundred and sixty-one years. During these two and a half centuries, as generations came and went, storms of war and woe were incessantly sweeping over France. The history of the kingdom during these dreary ages is but the record of the intrigues of ecclesiastics, the conflicts between monarchs and nobles, and the sweep of maddened armies. The *Third Estate*, the people, continued to be deprived of almost all social and political rights. They were debased by ignorance and depressed by intolerable burdens. The monarchy was gradually centralizing power. The chiefs and sub-chiefs of the conglomerated tribes were losing their feudal authority and lapsing into nobles of higher and lower rank, whose splendor was obtained by exemption from all the burdens of the state, and by enormous taxation of the people. The Roman Catholic Church, under the Popes, blazed with almost supernatural splendor over Europe; and the high dignitaries of the Church, as lords spiritual, were as luxurious, haughty, and domineering as were any of the lords temporal.

Henry III., the last of the Valois race, was stabbed by a friar in 1589, and died leaving no issue. Henry of Bourbon, King of Navarre, as the nearest relative, claimed the crown. He ascended the throne as Henry IV.,

and after several years of civil war put down all opposition. He was the first of the Bourbon family who swayed the sceptre, and by far the most able and energetic. Under his vigorous sway the kingdom became consolidated, the throne attained a great supremacy over the nobles, and the resources of the realm were greatly developed. Henry IV. was sincerely devoted to the interests of France. He encouraged commerce, manufactures, and the arts; endeavored to enforce equitable laws, and under his wise administration the *people* made decided advances in wealth and intelligence. He retained the throne for twenty-one years, until 1610, when he died beneath the dagger of an assassin. Though Henry governed *for* the people, he did not admit them to any voice in public affairs. During his long reign no assembly was convened in which the people had any representation.

Henry IV. at his death left a son, Louis, nine years of age. The mother of this child, Mary of Medicis, was invested with the regency. When this prince was fourteen years of age he was considered by the laws of France as having attained his majority. He accordingly, while thus but a boy, marrying a bride of fifteen, Anne of Austria, ascended the throne as Louis XIII. For twenty-eight years this impotent prince sat upon the throne, all the time in character a bashful boy devoid of any qualities which could command respect. Cardinal Richelieu was during this reign the real monarch of France. Measurelessly ambitious, arrogant, and cruel, he consolidated the despotism of the throne, and yet, by far-reaching policy, greatly promoted the power and grandeur of the kingdom. This renowned minister, stern, vindictive, cruel, shrinking from no crime in the accomplishment of his plans, with the dungeons of the Bastilles of France and the executioner's axe at his command, held the impotent king and the enslaved kingdom for nearly thirty years in trembling obedience to his will.

The Chateau of Versailles was commenced by Richelieu. He also, in the year 1635, established the French Academy, which has since exerted so powerful an influence upon literature and science throughout Europe. Richelieu died in December, 1642, and six months after, in May, 1643, Louis XIII., who, during his reign, had been but a puppet in the hands of the cardinal, followed him to the tomb. As the monarch was lying upon his dying bed, he called his little son, five years of age, to his side, and said to

him, "What is your name?" "Louis Fourteenth," answered the proud boy, already eager to grasp the sceptre. "Not yet, not yet," sadly rejoined the dying father.

Anne of Austria held the regency for nine years, until her son, having attained the age of fourteen, had completed his minority and assumed the crown. Under this powerful prince the monarchy of France, as an unlimited despotism, became firmly established. The nobles, though deprived of all political power, were invested with such enormous privileges, enabling them to revel in wealth and luxury, that they were ever ready to unite with the king in quelling all uprising of the people, who were equally robbed by both monarch and noble. During the long reign of this monarch, for Louis XIV. sat upon the throne for seventy-two years, if we consider his reign to have commenced when he was proclaimed king upon the death of his father, France made vast strides in power, wealth, and splendor. Palaces arose almost outvying the dreams of an Oriental imagination. The saloons of Marly, the Tuileries, the Louvre, and Versailles, were brilliant with a splendor, and polluted with debaucheries, which Babylon, in its most festering corruption, could not have rivaled. The nobles, almost entirely surrendered to enervating indulgence, were incapacitated for any post which required intellectual activity and energy. Hence originated a class of men who became teachers, editors, scientific and literary writers, jurists, and professional men. In the progress of commerce and manufactures, wealth increased with this class, and the king, to raise money, would often sell, at an enormous price, a title of nobility to some enriched tradesman.

A numerous and powerful middle class, rich and highly educated, was thus gradually formed, who had emerged from the people, and whose sympathies were entirely with them. The nobles looked upon all these, however opulent, or cultivated in mind, or polished in manners, with contempt, as low-born. They refused all social intercourse with them, regarding them as a degraded caste. They looked with even peculiar contempt upon those who had purchased titles of nobility.

They drew a broad line of distinction between the *nobles* and the *ennobled*. The hereditary aristocracy, proud of a lineage which could be traced through a hundred generations, and which was lost in the haze of antiquity, exclaimed with pride, instinct to the human heart:

> "You may give a lucky tradesman, in exchange for money, a title of nobility, but you can not thus make him a nobleman; you can not thus constitute him a lineal descendant of the old Frank barons; you can not thus constitute him a Lorraine, a Montmorency, a Rohan. God alone can create a nobleman."

Thus they regarded a man who had been ennobled by a royal decree, or who had descended from a father or a grandfather thus ennobled, as a new man, an upstart, one hardly redeemed from contempt. The doors of their saloons were closed against him, and he was every where exposed to mortifying neglect. A noble whose lineage could be traced for two or three centuries, but whose origin was still *distinctly defined*, was considered as perhaps belonging to the aristocratic calendar, though of low estate. The fact that the time once was, when his ancestors were known to be low-born, was a damaging fact, which no subsequent ages of nobility could entirely efface. He only was the true noble, the origin of whose nobility was lost in the depths of the past, the line of whose ancestry ran so far back into the obscurity of by-gone ages that no one could tell when it commenced.

It has generally been said that there were three estates in the realm; the clergy composing the first, the nobles the second, and the people the third. But the higher class of the clergy, luxuriating in the bishoprics and the abbacies, with their rich emoluments, were the sons of the nobility, and shared in all the privileges and popular odium pertaining to that class. The lower clergy, devoted to apostolic labors and poverty, belonged to the people, and were with them in all their sympathies. Thus there were in reality but two classes, the *privileged* and the *unprivileged*, the *patrician* and the *plebeian*, the *tax payer* and the *tax receiver*. The castle, whether baronial or monastic in its architecture, was the emblem of the one, the thatched cottage the symbol of the other. Louis XIV., as Madame de Maintenon testifies, was *shocked* to learn that Jesus Christ associated with the poor and the humble, and conversed freely with them.

Soon after the succession of Louis XIV. to the throne he became convinced that the maintenance of the Romish hierarchy was essential to the stability of his power. He consequently commenced a series of persecutions of the Protestants, with the determination of driving that faith

entirely from France. In 1662 he issued a decree that no Protestant should be buried except after sunset or before sunrise. Protestant mechanics or shop-keepers were not allowed to have apprentices. Protestant teachers were permitted to instruct only in the first rudiments of letters, and not more than twelve Protestants were allowed to meet together for the purposes of worship. No Protestant woman could be a nurse in the chamber of infancy; no Catholic could embrace Protestantism or marry a Protestant woman under pain of exile. Catholic magistrates were empowered to enter the dying chambers of the Protestants to tease them, when gasping in death, to return to the Catholic faith. In four years, between 1680 and 1684, more than twenty royal edicts were issued against the Protestants, decreeing, among other things, that no Protestant should be a lawyer, doctor, apothecary, printer, or grocer. Children were often taken by violence from Protestant parents, that they might be trained in the Catholic faith.

Madame de Maintenon, the unacknowledged wife of Louis XIV., wished to bring back into the fold of Rome a young lady, Mademoiselle de Murgay. She consequently wrote to her brother:

> "If you could send her to me you would do me a great pleasure. There are no other means than violence, for they will be much afflicted in the family by De Murgay's conversion. I will send you a *lettre de cachet* (secret warrant) in virtue of which you will take her into your own house until you find an opportunity of sending her off."[8]

Such outrages as these were of constant occurrence. Zeal for the conversion of the Protestants never rose to a higher pitch. At the same time Louis XIV. could bid defiance to God's commands, and insult the moral sense of the nation by traveling with his wife and his two guilty favorites, Madame de Montespan and Madame la Vallière, all in the same carriage. The profligacy of the ecclesiastics and the debauchery of the court and the nobles, though less disguised during the wild saturnalia of the succeeding regency, was never more universal than during this reign. This was the golden age of kings. Feudality had died, and democracy was not born. The monarchy was absolute. The nobles, deprived of all *political*

power, existed merely as a luxurious appendage and embellishment to the throne, while the people, unconscious of either power or rights, made no movements to embarrass the sovereign.[9]

In the year 1681 Louis XIV. commenced his system of dragooning the Protestants into the Catholic faith. He sent regiments of cavalry into the provinces, quartered them in the houses of the Protestants, placing from four to ten in each family, and enjoined it upon these soldiers to do every thing they could to compel the Protestants to return to the Catholic faith. Scenes ensued too awful to be narrated. He who has nerves to endure the recital can find the atrocities minutely detailed in "*L'Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes, par Elias Benoît*."

The brutal soldiery, free from all restraint, committed every conceivable excess. They scourged little children in the presence of their parents, that the shrieks of agony of the child might induce the parents to abjure their faith. They violated the modesty of women and girls, and mangled their bodies with the lash. They tortured, mutilated, disfigured. And when human nature in its extreme of agony yielded, the exhausted victim was compelled to sign a recantation of his faith, declaring that he did it of his own free will, without compulsion or persuasion. In their terror the Protestants fled in all directions, into the fields, the forests, to caves, and made desperate endeavors to escape from the kingdom. Multitudes died of exhaustion and famine by the way-side and on the sea-shore. Large tracts of country were thus nearly depopulated. Madame de Maintenon wrote to her brother, sending him a present of a large sum of money:

> "I beseech you employ usefully the money you are to have. The lands in Poitou are sold for nothing. The distresses of the Protestants will bring more into market. You can easily establish yourself splendidly in Poitou."

The Protestant countries, England, Switzerland, Holland, and Denmark, issued proclamations to these persecuted Christians offering them an asylum. The court was alarmed, and interdicted their leaving the kingdom under penalty of condemnation to the galleys, confiscation of

their property, and the annulling of all contracts they should have made for a year before their emigration.[10]

The condition of the Protestants was now miserable in the extreme. It was the determination of the court utterly to exterminate the reformed faith. The Archbishop of Paris made out a list of the works of four hundred authors who were considered as assailing Catholicism, and all the libraries, public and private, of the kingdom were searched that the condemned books might be burned.

There were between two and three millions of Protestants in France.[11] The dragoons were sent in every direction through the kingdom, enjoined by the court, to secure, at whatever expense of torture, a return to Catholicism. One of the tortures which these merciless fanatics were fond of applying was to deprive their victim of sleep. They kept the sufferer standing, and relieved each other in their cruel work of pinching, pricking, twitching, pulling with ropes, burning, suffocating with offensive fumes, until after successive days and nights of torture the victim was driven to madness, and to promise any thing to escape from his tormentors. By these means, it was boasted that in the district of Bordeaux, where there were one hundred and fifty thousand Protestants, one hundred and forty thousand were converted in a fortnight. The Duke of Noailles wrote to the court that in the district to which he had been sent with his dragoons there had been two hundred and forty thousand Protestants, but he thought that by the end of the month none could be left.

In the year 1598 Henry IV., by the Edict of Nantes, had granted freedom of conscience and of worship to the Protestants. Louis XIV. now issued a decree revoking this edict. The revocation, which was signed the 18th of October, 1685, states in the preamble that "since the better and the greater part of our subjects of the pretended reformed religion have embraced the Catholic faith, the maintenance of the Edict of Nantes remains superfluous." It then declares that no more exercise of the reformed worship is to be tolerated in the realm. All the Protestant pastors were to leave the kingdom within fifteen days, and were forbidden to exercise their office under pain of the galleys. Parents were forbidden to instruct their children in the reformed faith, and were enjoined to send them to the Catholic church to be baptized and to be instructed in the

Catholic schools and catechism, under penalty of a fine of five hundred livres. The Protestant laity were prohibited from emigrating under pain of the galleys for the men, and imprisonment for life for the women.

Notwithstanding the penalty, vast numbers escaped from the kingdom. No vigilance could guard such extended frontiers. In one year after the revocation, Vauban wrote that France had lost one hundred thousand inhabitants, twelve thousand disciplined soldiers, six hundred officers, and her most flourishing manufactures. The Duke of St. Simon records that "a fourth part of the kingdom was perceptibly depopulated."

These crimes perpetrated against religion filled the land with infidelity. There were even Catholics of noble name and note, as Fénélon and Massillon, who energetically remonstrated. Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Mirabeau, not distinguishing between Christianity and the Papal Church, uttered cries of indignation which thrilled upon the ear of Europe and undermined the foundations of Christianity itself.

The edict of revocation was executed with the utmost rigor. The pastors in Paris were not allowed even the fifteen days which the edict granted, but were ordered to leave in forty-eight hours. Those pastors who had children over seven years of age had those children taken from them. Fathers and mothers, thus robbed of their children, in poverty and heart-broken, were driven into exile. "Old men of eighty or ninety years were seen gathering up the last remains of their life to undertake distant journeys, and more than one died before reaching the asylum where he was to rest his weary foot and drooping head."[12]

The court became alarmed by the magnitude of emigration. Guards were posted at the gates of towns, at the fords of rivers, on the bridges, on the highways, and at all points of departure upon the frontiers. Still the fugitives, hiding in caverns by day and traveling by night through by-paths, in great numbers eluded their foes. Every conceivable disguise was adopted, as of shepherds, pilgrims, hunters, valets, merchants. Women of rank—for there were not a few such among the Protestants, who had been accustomed to all the delicacies and indulgences of life—traveled on foot, exposed to hunger and storms, two or three hundred miles. Girls of sixteen, of all ranks in life, incurred the same hardships and perils. They disfigured their faces, wore coarse and ragged garments, and trundled

wheel-barrows filled with manure, or carried heavy burdens, to elude suspicion. Some assumed the disguise of men or boys and took the office of servants; others feigned insanity or to be deaf and dumb. In these ways large numbers escaped to Rotterdam.[13]

Those near the sea-shore concealed themselves in ships among bales of merchandise, and in hogsheads stowed away among the freight. There were children who passed whole weeks in such lurking places without uttering a cry. Some desperately pushed out to sea in open boats, trusting to winds and waves to bear them to a place of safety. Thousands perished of cold, exposure, and starvation. Thousands were seized, loaded with chains, and dragged through the realm in derision and contempt, and were then condemned to pass the remainder of their days as galley-slaves. The galleys of Marseilles were crowded with these victims, among whom were many of the noblest men who have ever dwelt on earth. The prisons were crowded with women arrested in their flight and doomed to life-long captivity.

It is estimated that five hundred thousand found a refuge in foreign lands. Thirteen hundred passed through the city of Geneva in one week. England formed eleven regiments out of the refugees. One of the faubourgs of London was entirely peopled by these exiles. M. de Sismondi estimates that as many perished in the attempt to escape as escaped. A hundred thousand in the Province of Languedoc died prematurely, and of these ten thousand perished by fire, the gallows, or the wheel.[14] We can not but sympathize with the indignation of Michelet as he exclaims:

> "Let the Revolutionary Reign of Terror beware of comparing herself with the Inquisition. Let her never boast of having, in her two or three years, paid back to the old system what it did for us for six hundred years! The Inquisition would have good cause to laugh. What are the twelve thousand men guillotined of the one, to the millions of men butchered, hung, broken on the wheel—to that pyramid of burning stakes—to those masses of burnt flesh which the other piled up to heaven. The single inquisition of one of the provinces of Spain states, in an authentic monument, that in sixteen years it burned twenty thousand men!

> "History will inform us that in her most ferocious and implacable moments the Revolution trembled at the thought of aggravating death, that she shortened the sufferings of victims, removed the hand of man, and invented a machine to abridge the pangs of death.
>
> "And it will also inform us that the Church of the Middle Ages exhausted itself in inventions to augment suffering, to render it poignant, intense; that she found out exquisite arts of torture, ingenious means to contrive that, without dying, one might long taste of death; and that, being stopped in that path by inflexible Nature, who, at a certain degree of pain, mercifully grants death, she wept at not being able to make man suffer longer."[15]

Louis XIV. died in 1715. He did not allow any assembly of the states to be convened during his reign. Every body began to manifest discontent. The nobility were humbled and degraded, and hungered for more power. The people had become very restive. The humbler class of the clergy, sincere Christians and true friends of their parishioners, prayed earnestly for reform. The Jesuits alone united with the monarch and his mistresses to maintain despotic sway. The court was utterly corrupt; the king a shameless profligate. Every thing was bartered for money. Justice was unknown. The court reveled in boundless luxury, while the mass of the people were in a state almost of starvation. The burden had become intolerable.

The monarchy of France attained its zenith during the reign of Louis XIV. Immense standing armies overawed Europe and prevented revolt at home. Literature and art flourished, for the king was ambitious to embellish his reign with the works of men of genius. Great freedom of opinion and of utterance was allowed, for neither king nor courtiers appear to have had any more fear of a rising of the peasants than they had of a revolt of the sheep. Vast works were constructed, which the poor and the starving alone paid for. Still there were not a few who perceived that the hour of vengeance was at hand. One of the magistrates of Louis XIV. remarked, "The conflict is soon to arrive between those who pay and those

whose only function is to receive." The Duke of Orleans, who was regent after the death of Louis XIV., said, "If I were a subject I would most certainly revolt. The people are good-natured fools to suffer so long."

Louis XIV. left the throne to his great-grandchild, a boy five years of age. The populace followed the hearse of the departed monarch with insults and derisive shouts to the tomb. The hoary despot, upon a dying bed, manifested some compunctions of conscience. He left to his successor the words:

> "I have, against my inclination, imposed great burdens on my subjects; but have been compelled to do it by the long wars which I have been obliged to maintain. Love peace, and undertake no war, except when the good of the state and the welfare of your people render it necessary."

These words were not heeded, until the people were, in their terrible might, inspired by fury and despair.

There is nothing more mournful to contemplate than the last days of Louis XIV. He was the victim of insupportable melancholy, dreading death almost with terror. His children and his grandchildren were nearly all dead. The people were crushed by burdens which they could no longer support. The treasury was in debt over eight hundred millions of dollars. Commerce was destroyed, industry paralyzed, and the country uncultivated and in many places almost depopulated. The armies of France had been conquered and humiliated; a disastrous war was threatening the realm, and the king from his dying bed could hear the execrations of the people, rising portentously around his throne.

FOOTNOTES:

8. Histoire de Madame de Maintenon, et des principaux Evenements du Regne de Louis XIV. Par M. le Duc de Noilles, Paris, 1848.

9. "Madame de Maintenon," writes St. Simon, "had men, affairs, justice, religion, all, without exception, in her hands, and the king and the state her victims."

10. Under these circumstances the Protestants sent the following touching petition: "It being impossible for us to live without the exercise of our religion, we are compelled, in spite of ourselves, to supplicate your majesty, with the most profound humility and respect, that you

may be pleased to allow us to leave the kingdom, with our wives, our children, and our effects, to settle in foreign countries, where we can freely render to God the worship which we believe indispensable, and on which depends our happiness or our misery for eternity." This petition met only the response of aggravated severities.—*Hist. of the Protestants of France, by G. de Félice*, p. 486.

11. History of the Protestants of France, by G. de Félice, p. 405.

12. History of the Protestants of France, by G. de Félice, p. 408.

13. Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes, par Elias Benoît, tome v., p. 953.

14. Boulainvilliers.

15. "It is painful to detect continually the hand of the clergy in these scenes of violence, spoliation, and death. The venerable Malesherbes, the Baron de Breteuil, Rulhières, Joly de Fleury, Gilbert de Voisins, Rippert de Monclus, the highest statesmen, the most eminent magistrates, who have written upon the religious affairs of this period, utter but one voice on it. They agree in signalizing the influence of the priests, an influence as obstinate as incessant, sometimes haughty, sometimes supple and humble, but always supplicating the last means of restraint and severity for the re-establishment of religious unity."—*History of the Protestants of France, by G. de Félice*, p. 487.

Chapter III.
The Regency and Louis XV

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State of France.—The Regency.—Financial Embarrassment.—Crimes of the Rulers.—Recoining the Currency.—Renewed Persecution of the Protestants.—Bishop Dubois.—Philosophy of Voltaire.—Anecdote of Franklin.—The King's Favorites.—Mademoiselle Poisson.—Her Ascendency.—*Parc aux Cerfs.*—Illustrative Anecdote.—Letter to the King.—Testimony of Chesterfield.—Anecdote of La Fayette.—Death of Pompadour.—Mademoiselle Lange.—Power of Du Barry.—Death of Louis XV.

The reign of Louis XIV. was that of an Oriental monarch. His authority was unlimited and unquestioned. The people had two powerful foes, the king and the nobles. The nobles, as the most numerous, were the most dreaded. The people consequently looked to the kings to protect them against the nobles, as sheep will look to their natural enemy, the dogs, to defend them from their still worse enemies, the wolves. The king had now obtained a perfect triumph over the nobles, and had gathered all the political power into his own hands. He had accomplished this by bribery, as well as by force. The acquiescence of the nobles in his supremacy was purchased by his conferring upon them all the offices of honor and emolument, by exempting them from all taxes, and by supporting them in indolence, luxury, and vice, from the toil of the crushed and starving masses. There were now in the nation two classes, and two only, with an impassable gulf between them. On the one side were eighty thousand aristocratic families living in idleness and luxury; on the other were twenty-four millions of people, who, as a mass, were kept in the lowest poverty, maintaining by their toil the haughty nobles, from whom they received only outrage and contempt

Louis XIV. just before his death drew up an edict appointing a council of regency during the minority of his great-grandson, the young king. The

Parliament of Paris, however, declared the will null, and appointed the Duke of Orleans, who was considered favorable to the nobles, regent! For eight years, from 1715 to 1723, the regent, by shameless profligacy and extravagance, was but filling up the measure of wrath which had been accumulating for ages. Nothing was done to promote the welfare of the people, and, notwithstanding the misery which was actually depopulating the provinces, the gorgeous palaces of France exhibited scenes of voluptuousness which the wealth of the Orient had never paralleled.

Louis XIV. had expended upon the single palace of Versailles more than two hundred millions of dollars. The roofs of that vast pile would cover a surface of twenty-five French acres. Thirty thousand laborers were frequently employed simultaneously in embellishing the magnificent park sixty miles in circuit.[16] Marly, with its fountains, its parks, and gardens, had also been constructed with equal extravagance. Both of these palaces exhibited scenes of measureless profligacy gilded by the highest fascinations of external refinement and elegance. Louis XIV. left the nation in debt eight hundred and fifty millions of dollars. For several years the expenditure had exceeded the income by nearly thirty millions of dollars a year. The regent during the seven years of his profligate administration had added to this debt a hundred and fifty millions of dollars.

There was now fearful embarrassment in the finances. All the measures for extorting money seemed to be exhausted, and it was found impossible to raise the sums necessary to meet the expenses of the court and to pay the interest upon the debt. Taxation had gone to its last extremity; and no more money could be borrowed. The Duke of St. Simon proposed that the treasury should declare itself bankrupt.

"The loss," said he, "will fall upon the commercial and moneyed classes, whom no one fears or pities. The measure," he continued, "will also be a salutary rebuke to the ignoble classes, teaching them to beware how they lend money to the king which will enable him to gain the supremacy over the nobles."

The Duke of Orleans, who was regent only, not king, could sympathize in these views. The general discontent, however, was such, that he did not dare to resort to so violent a measure. The end was accomplished in a

more circuitous way. A commission of courtiers was appointed to examine the accounts of the public creditors. Three hundred and fifty millions of francs ($76,000,000) were peremptorily struck from their claims. There was no appeal. This mode of paying debts seemed so successful that the commission established itself as an inquisitorial chamber, and summoned before it all those who had been guilty of lending money to the king. Most of these were thrown into prison, and threatened with death unless they purchased pardon for the crime with large sums of money. The regent and the nobles made themselves merry with the woes of these low-born men of wealth, and filled their purses by selling their protection.

A wealthy financier was perishing in one of the dungeons of the Bastille. A count visited him and offered to procure his release for sixty thousand dollars. "I thank you, Monsieur le Comte," was the reply, "but Madame, your countess, has just been here, and has promised me my liberty for half that sum."

The reign of the regent Duke of Orleans was the reign of the nobles, and they fell eagerly upon the people, whom Louis XIV. had sheltered from their avarice that more plunder might be left for him. The currency was called in and recoined, one fifth being cut from the value of each piece. By this expedient the court gained nearly fifteen millions of dollars.

Soon this money was all gone. The horizon was darkening and the approaching storm gathering blackness. Among the nobles there were some who abhorred these outrages. A party was organized in Paris opposed to the regent. They sent in a petition that the States-General might be assembled to deliberate upon the affairs of the realm. All who signed this petition were sent to the Bastille. There had been no meeting of the States-General called for more than one hundred years. The last had been held in 1614. It consisted of 104 deputies of the clergy, 132 of the nobles, and 192 of the people. The three estates had met separately and chosen their representatives. But the representatives of the people in this assembly displayed so much spirit that the convention was abruptly dismissed by the king, and neither king nor nobles were willing to give them a hearing again.

A bank was now established with a nominal capital of six millions of francs ($1,200,000). The shares were taken up by paying half in money and half in valueless government bills. Thus the *real* capital of the bank

was $600,000. Upon this capital bills were issued to the amount of three thousand millions of francs ($600,000,000). Money was of course for a time plenty enough. The bubble soon burst. This operation vastly increased the financial ruin in which the nation was involved. Five hundred thousand citizens were plunged into bankruptcy.[17] The Parliament of Paris, though composed of the privileged class, made a little show of resistance to such outrages and was banished summarily to Pontoise.

Dubois, one of the most infamous men who ever disgraced even a court, a tool of the regent, and yet thoroughly despised by him, had the audacity one morning to ask for the vacant archbishopric of Cambray. Dubois was not even a priest, and the demand seemed so ridiculous as well as impudent that the regent burst into a laugh, exclaiming,

> "Should I bestow the archbishopric on such a knave as thou art, where should I find a prelate scoundrel enough to consecrate thee?"

"I have one here," said Dubois, pointing to a Jesuit prelate who was ready to perform the sacrilegious deed. Dubois had promised Rohan that if he would consecrate him he would bring back the favor of the court to the Jesuit party. One of the mistresses of the regent had been won over by Dubois, and the bloated debauchee was consecrated as Archbishop of Cambray. Dubois was now in the line of preferment. He soon laid aside his mitre for a cardinal's hat, and in 1722 was appointed prime minister. The darkness of the Middle Ages had passed away, and these scandals were perpetrated in the full light of the 18th century. The people looked on with murmurs of contempt and indignation. It was too much to ask, to demand reverence for such a church.[18]

The infamous Jesuit, Lavergne de Tressan, Bishop of Nantes, who consecrated Dubois, revived from their slumber the most severe ordinances of Louis XIV. Louis XV. was then fourteen years of age. Royal edicts were issued, sentencing to the galleys for life any man and to imprisonment for life any woman who should attend other worship than the Catholic. Preachers of Protestantism were doomed to death; and any person who harbored such a preacher, or who should neglect to denounce him, was consigned to the galleys or the dungeon. All children were to be

baptized within twenty-four hours of their birth by the curate of the parish, and were to be placed under Catholic instructors until the age of fourteen. Certificates of Catholicity were essential for all offices, all academical degrees, all admissions into corporations of trade. This horrible outrage upon human rights was received by the clergy with transport. When we contemplate the seed which the king and the court thus planted, we can not wonder at the revolutionary harvest which was reaped.

The Catholic Church thus became utterly loathsome even to the most devout Christians. They preferred the philosophy of Montesquieu, the atheism of Diderot, the unbelief of Voltaire, the sentimentalism of Rousseau, to this merciless and bloody demon, assuming the name of the Catholic Church, and swaying a sceptre of despotism which was deluging France in blood and woe. The sword of persecution which had for a time been reposing in its scabbard was again drawn and bathed in blood. Many Protestant ministers were broken upon the wheel and then beheaded. Persecution assumed every form of insult and cruelty. Thousands fled from the realm. Religious assemblies were surrounded by dragoons, and fired upon with the ferocity of savages, killing and maiming indiscriminately men, women, and children. Enormous sums of money were, by the lash, torture, the dungeon, and confiscation, extorted from the Protestants. Noblemen, lawyers, physicians, and rich merchants were most eagerly sought.

The seizure of Protestant children was attended with nameless outrages. Soldiers, sword in hand, headed by the priests, broke into the houses, overturned every thing in their search, committed brutal violence upon the parents, and, reckless of their lamentations and despair, seized the terrified children, especially the young girls, and forced them into the convents.

Fanaticism so cruel was revolting to the intelligence and to the general conscience of the age. Maddened priests could easily goad on a brutal and exasperated populace to any deeds of inhumanity, but intelligent men of all parties condemned such intolerance. It is, however, worthy of note that few of the *philosophers* of that day ventured to plead for religious toleration. They generally hated Christianity in all its forms, and were not at all disposed to shield one sect from the persecutions of another. Voltaire, however, was an exception. He had spent a year and a half in the

Bastille on the charge of having written a libel against the government, which libel he did not write. When it was proved to the court that he did not write the libel he was liberated from prison and banished from France. Several years after this, Voltaire, having returned to France, offended a nobleman, the Chevalier de Rohan. The chevalier disdainfully sent his servant to chastise the poet. Voltaire, enraged by the degradation, sent a challenge to De Rohan. For the crime of challenging a noble he was again thrown into the Bastille. After six months he was released and again exiled. Soon after his *Lettres Philosophiques* were condemned by the Parliament to be burned, and an order was issued for his arrest. For many years he was compelled to live in concealment. He thus learned how to sympathize with the persecuted. In his masterly treatise upon toleration, and in his noble appeals for the family of the murdered Protestant, Jean Calas, he spoke in clarion tones which thrilled upon the ear of France. When Franklin in Paris called upon Voltaire, with his grandson, he said, "My son, fall upon your knees before this great man." The aged poet, then over eighty years of age, gave the boy his blessing, with the characteristic words, "*God and freedom.*" The philosophy of Voltaire overturned the most despicable of despotisms. His want of religion established another despotism equally intolerable.

The miserable regent died in a fit in the apartment of his mistress in 1723. The young king was now fourteen years of age. He was a bashful boy, with no thought but for his own indulgence. When a child he was one day looking from the windows of the Tuileries into the garden, which was filled with a crowd.

"Look there, my king," said Villeroi, his tutor; "all these people belong to you. All that you see is your property; you are lord and master of it."

Louis XV. carried these principles into vigorous practice during his long reign of fifty-nine years. When fifteen years of age he married Maria, daughter of Stanislaus, the exiled King of Poland. Maria was not beautiful, but through a life of neglect and anguish she developed a character of remarkable loveliness and of true piety. There is but little to record of France during these inglorious years which is worthy of the name of history. The pen can only narrate a shameful tale of puerility, sin, and oppression. Weary and languid with worn-out excitements, the king at one time took a sudden freak for worsted-work, and the whole court was

thrown into commotion as imitative nobles and ecclesiastics were busy in the saloons of Versailles with wool, needles, and canvas.

The king at one of his private suppers noticed a lady, Madame de Mailly, whose vivacity attracted him. Simply to torture the queen he took her for his favorite, and received her into the apartment from which he excluded his meek and virtuous wife. Maria could only weep and look to God for solace. Madame de Mailly had a sister, a bold, spirited girl, Mademoiselle de Nesle. She came to visit the court, and after vigorous efforts succeeded in supplanting her sister, and took her degrading place. She was suddenly cut off in her sins by death; but there was another sister of the same notorious family, Madame Tournelle, who endeavored to solace the king by throwing herself into his arms. The king received her, and she became his acknowledged favorite, and for some time maintained the position of sultana of the royal harem. Wherever she went a suite of court-ladies followed in her train. All were compelled to pay homage to the reigning favorite of the day, for all power was in her hands, and she was the dispenser of rewards and punishments. The king conferred upon this guilty woman, who was as cruel as she was guilty, the title of Duchess of Chateauroux. Madame de Tencin, one of the ladies of the court, in a confidential letter to Richelieu, written at this time, says:

> "What happens in his kingdom seems to be no business of the king's. It is even said that he avoids taking any cognizance of what occurs, averring that it is better to know nothing than to learn unpleasant tidings. Unless God visibly interferes, it is physically impossible that the state should not fall to pieces."

Even Madame Chateauroux, herself one of the most corrupt members of that court of unparalleled corruption, remarked to a friend,

> "I could not have believed all that I now see. If no remedy is administered to this state of things, there will, sooner or later, be a great overthrow."[19]

Though the Duchess of Chateauroux was the reigning favorite, she had another younger sister who was a member of the royal harem. The princess

of the blood, Mademoiselle Valois, and the Princess of Conti were also in this infamous train. These revolting facts must be stated, for they are essential to the understanding of the French Revolution. Up to this time the king, of whom the people knew but little, was regarded with affection. They looked upon him as the only barrier to protect them from the nobles. Soon after this Madame Chateauroux was taken sick and died in remorse, crying bitterly for mercy, and promising, if her life could be spared, amendment and penance. She was so detested by the people that an armed escort conducted her remains to the grave to shield them from popular violence.

The king, for a time, was quite chagrined by the death of this woman, who had obtained a great control over him. While profligacy and boundless extravagance were thus rioting in the palace, bankruptcy was ruining merchants and artisans, and misery reigned in the huts of the peasants.

A citizen of Paris by the name of Poisson had a daughter of marvelous grace and beauty. Mademoiselle Poisson married a wealthy financier, M. Etoilles. She then, conscious of her beauty and of her unrivaled powers of fascination, formed the bold and guilty resolve to throw herself into the arms of the king. When the king was hunting in the forest of Senart she placed herself in his path, as if by accident, in an open barouche, dressed in a manner to shed the utmost possible lustre upon her charms. The voluptuous king fixed his eye upon her and soon sent for her to come to the palace of Versailles. The royal mandate was eagerly obeyed. She immediately engrossed the favor of the king, was established in the palace, and henceforth became the great power before which all France was constrained to bow. Her disconsolate husband, who had loved her passionately, entreated her to return to him, promising to forgive every thing. Scornfully she refused to turn her back upon the splendors of Versailles. Receiving from the king as the badge of her degradation the title of Marchioness of Pompadour, Jeannette Poisson was enthroned as the real monarch of France. She was a woman of vast versatility of talent, brilliant in conversation, and possessed unrivaled powers of fascination. For twenty years she held the king in perfect subjection to her sway. She never for one moment lost sight of her endeavor to please and to govern the monarch. "Sometimes she appeared before him clad as a peasant-girl,

assuming all the simplicity and rustic grace of this character. She took with equal ease the appearance of a languishing Venus or the proud beauty of a Diana. To these disguises often succeeded the modest garb of a nun, when, with affected humility and downcast eyes, she came to meet the king."

Her power soon became unlimited and invincible, for her heart was of iron, and even her feminine hand could wield all the terrors of court banishment, confiscation, exile, and the Bastille. It is said that a witticism of Frederic II. of Prussia, at her expense, plunged France into all the horrors of the Seven Years' War. The most high-born ladies in the land were her waiting-women. Her steward was a knight of the order of St. Louis. When she rode out in her sedan-chair, the Chevalier d'Hénin, a member of one of the noblest families of the kingdom, walked respectfully by her side, with her cloak upon his arm, ready to spread it over her shoulder whenever she should alight.

She summoned embassadors before her, and addressed them with the regal *we*, assuming the style of royalty. She appointed bishops and generals, and filled all the important offices of Church and State with those who would do her homage. She dismissed ministers and created cardinals, declared war and made peace. Voltaire paid court to her, and devoted his muse to the celebration of her beauty and her talents. Montesquieu, Diderot, and Quesnay waited in her antechamber, imploring her patronage. Those authors who pleased her she pensioned and honored; those who did not were left in poverty and neglect. Even the imperial Maria Theresa, seeking the alliance of France, wrote to her with her own hand, addressing her as her "dear friend and cousin." "Not only," said Madame de Pompadour one day to the Abbé de Bernis, "not only have I all the nobility at my feet, but even my lap-dog is weary of their fawnings." Rousseau, strong in the idolatry of the nation, refused to join the worshipers at the shrine of Pompadour. She dared not send *him* to the Bastille, but vexatiously exclaimed "I will have nothing more to do with that *owl*."

As Madame de Pompadour found her charms waning, she maintained her place by ministering to the king's appetites in the establishment of the most infamous institution ever tolerated in a civilized land. Lacretelle, in his History of France, thus describes this abomination:

> "Louis XV., satiated with the conquests which the court offered him, was led by a depraved imagination to form an establishment for his pleasures of such an infamous description that, after having depicted the debaucheries of the regency, it is difficult to find terms appropriate to an excess of this kind. Several elegant houses, built in an inclosure called the *Parc aux Cerfs*, near Versailles, were used for the reception of beautiful female children, who there awaited the pleasure of their master. Hither were brought young girls, sold by their parents, and sometimes forced from them. It was skillfully and patiently fostered by those who ministered to the profligacy of Louis; whole years were occupied in the debauchery of girls not yet in a marriageable age, and in undermining the principles of modesty and fidelity in young women."

When some one spoke to Madame de Pompadour of this establishment, she replied,

> "It is the king's heart that I wish to possess, and none of these little uneducated girls will deprive me of that."

If the king in his rides chanced to see a pretty child who gave promise of unusual beauty, he sent his servants to take her from her parents to be trained in his harem. The parents had their choice to submit quietly at home, or to submit in the dungeons of the Bastille. One incident, related by Soulavie, in his "Anecdotes of the Reign of Louis XV.," illustrates the mode of operation:

> "Among the young ladies of very tender age with whom the king amused himself during the influence of Madame de Pompadour or afterward, there was also a Mademoiselle Treicelin, whom his majesty ordered to take the name of Bonneval the very day she was presented to him. The king was the first who perceived this child, when not above nine years old, in the care of a nurse, in the garden of the Tuileries, one

> day when he went in state to his good city of Paris; and having in the evening spoken of her beauty to Le Bel, the servant applied to M. de Sartine, who traced her out and bought her of the nurse for a few louis. She was the daughter of M. de Treicelin, a man of quality, who could not patiently endure an affront of this nature. He was, however, compelled to be silent; he was told his child was lost, and that it would be best for him to submit to the sacrifice unless he wished to lose his liberty also."

The expense of the *Parc aux Cerfs* alone, according to Lacretelle, amounted to 100,000,000 francs—$25,000,000.

These were not deeds of darkness. They were open as the day. France, though bound hand and foot, saw them, and exasperation was advancing to fury. An anonymous letter was sent to Louis, depicting very vividly the ruinous state of affairs and announcing the inevitable shock. Madame de Hausset, in her memoirs, gives the following synopsis of this letter:

> "Your finances are in the greatest disorder, and the great majority of states have perished through this cause. Your ministers are without capacity. Open war is carried on against religion. The encyclopedists, under pretense of enlightening mankind, are sapping the foundations of Christianity. All the different kinds of liberty are connected. The philosophers and the Protestants tend toward republicanism. The philosophers strike at the root, the others lop the branches, and their efforts will one day lay the tree low. Add to these the economists, whose object is political liberty, as that of others is liberty of worship, and the government may find itself in twenty or thirty years undermined in every direction, and it will then fall with a crash. Lose no time in restoring order to the state of the finances. Embarrassments necessitate fresh taxes, which grind the people and induce toward revolt. A time will come, sire, when the people will be enlightened, and that time is probably near at hand."

The king read this letter to Madame de Pompadour, and then, turning upon his heel, said,

> "I wish to hear no more about it. Things will last as they are as long as I shall."

On another occasion, Mirabeau the elder remarked in the drawing-room of Madame de Pompadour,

> "This kingdom is in a deplorable state. There is neither national energy nor money. It can only be regenerated by a conquest like that of China, or by some great internal convulsion. But woe to those who live to see that. The French people do not do things by halves."

Madame de Pompadour herself was fully aware of the catastrophe which was impending, but she flattered herself that the storm would not burst during her life. She often said, "Après nous le déluge"—"*After us comes the deluge*."

The indications of approaching ruin were so evident that they could not escape the notice of any observing man. Even Louis XV. himself was not blind to the tendency of affairs, and only hoped to ward off a revolution while his day should last.

Lord Chesterfield visited France in 1753, twenty years before the death of Louis XV., and wrote as follows to his son:

> "Wherever you are, inform yourself minutely of, and attend particularly to the affairs of France. They grow serious, and, in my opinion, will grow more so every day. The French nation reasons freely, which they never did before, upon matters of religion and government. In short, all the symptoms which I have ever met with in history previous to great changes and revolutions now exist and daily increase in France."

The great difficulty of raising money and the outrages resorted to for the accomplishment of that purpose alarmed the courtiers. One night, an

officer of the government, sitting at the bedside of the king conversing upon the state of affairs, remarked,

> "You will see, sire, that all this will make it absolutely necessary to assemble the States-General."

The king sprang up in his bed, and, seizing the courtier by his arm, exclaimed,

> "Never repeat those words. I am not sanguinary; but, had I a brother, and did he dare to give me such advice, I would sacrifice him within twenty-four hours to the duration of the monarchy and the tranquillity of the kingdom."

It is not strange that in such a court as this Christianity should have been reviled, and that infidelity should have become triumphant.

"When I was first presented to his majesty Louis XV.," La Fayette writes, "I well remember finding the eldest son of the Church, the King of France and Navarre, seated at a table between a bishop and a prostitute. At the same table was seated an aged philosopher, whose writings had conveyed lustre upon the age in which he flourished; one whose whole life had been spent in sapping the foundation of Christianity and undermining monarchy. Yet was this philosopher, at that moment, the object of honor from monarchs and homage from courtiers. A young abbé entered with me, not to be presented to royalty, but to ask the benediction of this enemy of the altar. The name of this aged philosopher was *Voltaire*, and that of the young abbé was Charles Maurice Talleyrand."

Nearly all the infidel writers of the day—Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, D'Alembert—were men hopelessly corrupt in morals. Many of them were keen-sighted enough distinctly to perceive the difference between Christianity and the lives of debauched ecclesiastics. But most of them hated Christianity and its restraints, and were glad to avail themselves of the corruptions of the Church that they might bring the religion of Christ into contempt. But there were not wanting, even then, men of most sincere and fearless piety, who advanced Christianity by their lives, and who with heroism rebuked sin in high places.

The Bishop of Senez was called to preach before the king. With the spirit of Isaiah and Daniel he rebuked the monarch for his crimes in terms so plain, direct, and pungent as to amaze the courtiers. The king was confounded, but God preserved his servant as Daniel was preserved in the lions' den.

At length Madame de Pompadour died, in 1764, and the execrations of France followed her to her burial. It was a gloomy day of wind and rain when the remains of this wretched woman were borne from Versailles to the tomb. The king had now done with her, and did not condescend to follow her to her burial. As the funeral procession left the court-yard of the palace he stood at a window looking out into the stormy air, and chuckled at his heartless witticism as he said, "The marchioness has rather a wet day to set out on her long journey." This remark is a fair index of the almost inconceivable heartlessness of this contemptible king.

Madame de Pompadour breathed her last at Versailles in splendid misery. She was fully conscious of the hatred of the nation, and trembled in view of the judgment of God. "My whole life," said she, in a despairing hour, "has been a continual death."

"Very different indeed," beautifully writes Julia Kavanagh, "were the declining years of Maria Lecsinska and those of the Marchioness of Pompadour. The patient and pious queen laid her sufferings at the foot of the cross. Insulted by her husband and his mistresses, neglected by the courtiers, deeply afflicted by the loss of her children, whom she loved most tenderly, she still found in religion the courage necessary to support her grief, and effectual consolation in the practice of a boundless benevolence."[20]

The old king was now utterly whelmed in the vortex of dissipation; character, and even self-respect, seemed entirely lost. He looked around for another female to take the place of Jeannette Poisson. In one of the low haunts of Parisian debauchery, the courtiers of the king found a girl of extraordinary beauty, calling herself Mademoiselle Lange. She had been sewing in the shop of a milliner, but was now abandoned to vice. She was introduced as a novelty to the voluptuous monarch, and succeeded in fascinating him. She received the title of Countess du Barry, and was immediately installed at Versailles as the acknowledged favorite of the

king. Vice never rises, but always descends in the scale of degradation. The king had first selected his favorites from the daughters of nobles, he then received one from the class whom he affected to despise as low-born; and now a common prostitute, taken from the warehouses of infamy in Paris, uneducated, and with the manners of a courtesan, is presented to the nation as the confidant and the manager of the despicable sovereign. All the high-born ladies, accustomed as they were to the corruptions of the court, regarded this as an insult too grievous to be borne. The nobles, the clergy, the philosophers, and the people, all joined in this outcry. But Madame du Barry, wielding the authority of the king, was too strong for them all. She dismissed and banished from the court the Duke of Choiseul, the king's minister, and to his post she raised one of her own friends. She then, with astounding boldness, suppressed the Parliaments, thus leaving to France not even the shadow of representative power. Thus she proceeded, step by step, removing enemies and supplanting them by friends, until the most noble of the land were emulous of the honor of admission to the saloon of this worthless woman.

It is an appalling and a revolting fact that for half a century before the revolution *France was governed by prostitutes*. The real sovereign was the shameless woman who, for the time being, kept control of the degraded and sensual king. "The individual," says De Tocqueville, "who would attempt to judge of the government by the men at the head of affairs and not by the women who swayed those men, would fall into the same error as he who judges of a machine by its outward action and not by its inward springs."

The king was now so execrated that he dared not pass through Paris in going from his palace at Versailles to Compiègne. Fearing insult and a revolt of the people if he were seen in the metropolis, he had a road constructed which would enable him to avoid Paris. As beautiful female children were often seized to replenish his seraglio at the *Parc aux Cerfs*, the people received the impression that he indulged in baths of children's blood, that he might rejuvenate his exhausted frame. The king had become an object of horror.[21]

Such was the state of affairs when the guilty king was attacked by the small-pox, and died at Versailles in 1774, in the sixty-fourth year of his

age and the fifty-ninth of his reign. Such in brief was the career of Louis XV. His reign was the consummation of all iniquity, and rendered the Revolution inevitable. The story of his life, revolting as it is, must be told; for it is essential to the understanding of the results which ensued. The whirlwind which was reaped was but the legitimate harvest of the wind which was sown. Truly does De Tocqueville say, "The Revolution will ever remain in darkness to those who do not look beyond it. It can only be comprehended by the light of the ages which preceded it. Without a clear view of society in the olden time, of its laws, its faults, its prejudices, its sufferings, its greatness, it is impossible to understand the conduct of the French during the sixty years which have followed its fall."

FOOTNOTES:

16. Galignani's Paris Guide.

17. History of French Revolution, by E.E. Crowe, vol. ii., p. 150.—*Enc. Am.*

18. The Duke of St. Simon, who was one of the council of the regency, in his admirable memoirs, gives the following sketch of Dubois: "Dubois was a little, thin, meagre man, with a polecat visage. All the vices, falsehood, avarice, licentiousness, ambition, and the meanest flattery contended in him for the mastery. He lied to such a degree as to deny his own actions when taken in the fact. In spite of his debauchery he was very industrious. His wealth was immense, and his revenue amounted to millions."

19. Women of France, p. 91.

20. Women of France, p. 170.

21. Historical View of the French Revolution, by J. Michelet, vol. i., p. 46.

Chapter IV.
Despotism and Its Fruits

Table of Contents

Assumptions of the Aristocracy.—Molière.—Decay of the Nobility.—Decline of the Feudal System.—Difference between France and the United States.—Mortification of Men of Letters.—Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau.—Corruption of the Church.—Diderot.—The Encyclopedists.—Testimony of De Tocqueville.—Frederic II. of Prussia.—Two Classes of Opponents of Christianity.—Enormity of Taxation.—Misery of the People.—"Good old Times of the Monarchy!"

Having given a brief sketch of the character of Louis XV., let us now contemplate the condition of France during his long reign. It has been estimated that the privileged class in both Church and State consisted of but one hundred and fifty thousand. It was their doctrine, enforced by the most rigorous practice, that the remaining twenty-five millions of France were created but to administer to their luxury; that this was the function which Providence intended them to perform. Every office which could confer honor and emolument in the Church, the army, the State, or the Court, was filled by the members of an aristocracy who looked with undisguised contempt upon all those who were not high-born, however opulent or however distinguished for talents and literary culture. Louis XV., surrounded by courtesans and debauched courtiers, deemed it presumption in Voltaire to think of sitting at the same table with the king. "I can give pensions to Voltaire, Montesquieu, Fontinelle, and Maupertius," said the king, "but I can not dine and sup with *these people*."[22]

The courtiers of Louis XIV. manifested in the most offensive manner the mortification which they felt in being obliged to receive Molière, the most distinguished comic dramatist of France, to their table. No degree of genius could efface the ignominy of not being nobly born.[23] But,

notwithstanding the arrogance of the nobles, they, as a class, had fallen into contempt. All who could support a metropolitan establishment had abandoned their chateaux and repaired to Paris. The rural castle was shut up, silence reigned in its halls, and grass waved in its court-yard. The bailiff only was left behind to wring the last farthing from the starving tenantry. Many of the noble families were in decay. Their poverty rendered their pride only the more contemptible. Several of the provinces contained large numbers of these impoverished aristocratic families, who had gradually parted with their lands, and who were living in a state of very shabby gentility. They were too proud to work and too poor to live without working. Turgot testifies that in the Province of Limousin there were several thousand noble families, not fifteen of whom had an income of four thousand dollars a year.[24] One of the crown officers wrote in 1750:

> "The nobility of this section are of very high rank, but very poor, and as proud as they are poor. The contrast between their former and their present condition is humiliating. It is a very good plan to keep them poor, in order that they shall need our aid and serve our purposes. They have formed a society into which no one can obtain admission unless he can prove four quarterings. It is not incorporated by letters patent, but it is tolerated, as it meets but once a year and in the presence of the intendant. These noblemen hear mass, after which they return home, some on their Rosinantes, some on foot. You will enjoy this comical assembly."

In days of feudal grandeur the noble was indeed the lord and master of the peasantry. He was their government and their sole protector from violence. There was then reason for feudal service. But now the noble was a drone. He received, and yet gave nothing, absolutely nothing, in return. The peasant despised as well as hated him, and derisively called him the *vulture*.

The feudal system is adapted only to a state of semi-barbarism. It can no more survive popular intelligence than darkness can exist after the rising of the sun. When, in the progress of society, nobles cease to be useful and become only drones; when rich men, vulgar in character, can

purchase titles of nobility, so that the nobles cease to be regarded as a peculiar and heaven-appointed race; when men from the masses, unennobled, acquire opulence, education, and that polish of manners which place them on an equality with titled men; when men of genius and letters, introduced into the saloons of the nobles, discover their own vast superiority to their ignorant, frivolous, and yet haughty entertainers; and when institutions of literature, science, and art create an aristocracy of scholarship where opulence, refinement, and the highest mental culture combine their charms, then an hereditary aristocracy, which has no support but its hereditary renown, must die. Its hour is tolled.

Such was the state of France at the close of the reign of Louis XV. It is estimated that there were in France at that time five hundred thousand well-informed citizens.[25] This fact explains both the outbreak of the Revolution and its failure. They were too many to submit to the arrogance of the nobles; hence the insurrection. They were too few to guide and control the infuriated masses when the pressure was taken from them, and hence the reign of terror, the anarchy and blood. The United States, with a population about the same as that of France in the morning of her Revolution, has four or five millions of intelligent and well-educated men. These men support our institutions. But for them, the republic would be swept away like chaff before the wind.

As we have before said, men of letters were patronized by the king and the court, but it was a patronage which seemed almost an insult to every honorable mind. The haughty duke would look down condescendingly, and even admiringly, upon the distinguished scholar, and would admit him into his saloon as a curiosity. High-born ladies would smile upon him, and would condescend to take his arm and listen to his remarks. But such mingling with society stung the soul with a sense of degradation, and none inveighed with greater bitterness against aristocratic assumption than those men of genius who had been most freely admitted into the halls of the great. They were thus exasperated to inquire into the origin of ranks, and their works were filled with eulogiums of equality and fraternity.

It was this social degradation which was one of the strongest incentives to revolution. This united all the industrial classes in France, all who had attained wealth, and all men of intellectual eminence, in the cry

for reform. Equality of rights was the great demand thus forced from the heart of the nation. *Fraternity* became the watch-word of the roused and rising masses.[26]

Thought was the great emancipator. Men of genius were the Titans who uphove the mountains of prejudice and oppression. They simplified political economy, and made it intelligible to the popular mind. Voltaire assailed with keenest sarcasm and the most piercing invectives the corruptions of the Church, unjustly, and most calamitously for the interests of France, representing those corruptions as Christianity itself. Montesquieu popularized and spread before the nation those views of national policy which might render a people prosperous and happy; and Rousseau, with a seductive eloquence which the world has never seen surpassed, excited every glowing imagination with dreams of fascinating but unattainable perfection. Nearly all the revolutionary writers represented religion not merely as a useless superstition, but as one of the worst scourges of the state. Thus they took from the human heart the influence which alone can restrain passion and humanize the soul.

They represented man but as a lamb, meek and innocent, dumb before his shearers, and seeking only to live harmlessly and happily in the outflowings of universal benevolence and love. This lamb-like man needed no more religion than does the butterfly or the robin. He was to live his joyous day, unrestrained by customs, or laws, or thoughts of the future, and then was to pass away like the lily or the rose, having fulfilled his function. Death an eternal sleep, was the corner-stone of their shallow and degrading philosophy. The advocates of this sentimentalism were amazed when they found the masses, brutalized by ignorance and ages of oppression, and having been taught that there was no God before whom they were to stand in judgment, come forth into the arena of the nations, not as lambs, but as wolves, thirsting for blood and reckless in devastation. Libertines in France are still infidels, but they have seen the effect of their doctrines, and no longer dare to proclaim them. "Where is the Frenchman of the present day," says De Tocqueville, "who would write such books as those of Diderot or Helvetius?"[27]

Unfortunately, fatally for the liberties of France, the leading writers were infidels. Mistaking the corruptions of Christianity for Christianity

itself, they assailed religion furiously, and succeeded in eradicating from men's souls all apprehensions of responsibility to God. Nothing could more effectually brutalize and demonize the soul of man. And yet the Papal Church, as a towering hierarchy, had become so corrupt, such an instrument of oppression, and such a support of despotism, that no reform could have been accomplished but by its overthrow.[28] It was the monarch's right arm of strength; it was the rampart which was first to be battered down.

The Church had no word of censure for vice in high places. It spread its shield before the most enormous abuses, and, by its inquisitorial censorship of the press, protected the most execrable institutions. The Church, enervated by wealth and luxurious indulgence, had also become so decrepit as to invite attack. No man could summon sufficient effrontery to attempt her defense. The only reply which bloated and debauched ecclesiastics could make to their assailants was persecution and the dungeon. There were a few truly pious men in the Church; they did, however, but exhibit in clearer contrast the general corruption with which they were surrounded.

Diderot, though educated by the Jesuits—perhaps *because* he was educated by the Jesuits—commenced his career by an attack upon Christianity in his *Pensées Philosophiques*. He was sent to prison, and his book burned by the public executioner. Still, multitudes read and so warmly applauded that he was incited to form the plan of the celebrated Encyclopedia which was to contain a summary of all human knowledge. In this grand enterprise he allied with him the ablest scholars and writers of the day—Mably, Condillac, Mercier, Raynal, Buffon, Helvetius, D'Alembert, and others. Nearly all these men, despising the *Church*, were unbelievers in *Christianity*. They consequently availed themselves of every opportunity to assail religion. The court, alarmed, laid a prohibition upon the work, but did not dare to punish the writers, as they were too numerous and powerful. Thus infidelity soon became a fashion. Notwithstanding the prohibition, the work was soon resumed, and became one of the most powerful agents in ushering in the Revolution.

"Christianity was hated by these philosophers," writes De Tocqueville, "less as a religious doctrine than as a political institution; not because the

ecclesiastics assumed to regulate the concerns of the other world, but because they were landlords, seigneurs, tithe-holders, administrators in this; not because the Church could not find a place in the new society which was being established, but because she then occupied a place of honor, privilege, and might in the society which was to be overthrown."

Christianity is the corner-stone of a true democracy. It is the unrelenting foe of despotism, and therefore despotism has invariably urged its most unrelenting warfare against the Bible. When papacy became the great spiritual despotism which darkened the world, the Bible was the book which it hated and feared above all others. With caution this corrupt hierarchy selected a few passages upon submission and obedience, which it allowed to be read to the people, while the majestic principles of fraternity, upon which its whole moral code is reared, were vigilantly excluded from the public mind. The peasant detected with a Bible was deemed as guilty as if caught with the tools of a burglar or the dies of a counterfeiter.

It was impossible, however, to conceal the fact that the Bible was the advocate of purity of heart and life. Its teachings created a sense of guilt in the human soul which could not be effaced. Corrupt men were consequently eager to reject the Bible, that they might appease reproachful conscience. Frederick II., of Prussia, an atheist and a despiser of mankind, became the friend and patron of Voltaire in his envenomed assaults upon Christianity. Louis XV., anxious to maintain friendly political relations with Prussia, hesitated to persecute the recognized friend of the Prussian king. The courtiers, generally with joy, listened to those teachings of unbelief which relieved them from the restraints of Christian morality. Thus Christianity had two classes of vigorous assailants. The first were those who knew not how to discriminate between Christianity and its corruptions. They considered Christianity and the Papal Church as one, and endeavored to batter the hateful structure down as a bastille of woe. Another class understood Christianity as a system frowning upon all impurity, and pressing ever upon the mind a final judgment. They were restive under its restraints, and labored for its overthrow that guilt might find repose in unbelief.

Astonishment is often expressed at the blindness with which the upper classes of the Old Régime allowed their institutions to be assailed. "But

where," asks De Tocqueville, "could they have learned better. Ruling classes can no more acquire a knowledge of the dangers they have to avoid, without free institutions, than their inferiors can discern the rights they ought to preserve in the same circumstances."[29]

The measureless extravagance of the court had plunged the nation into a state of inextricable pecuniary embarrassment. The whole burden of the taxes, in myriad forms, for the support of the throne in Oriental luxury, for the support of the nobles, who were perhaps the most profligate race of men the world has ever known; for the support of the Church, whose towering ecclesiastics, performing no useful functions, did not even affect the concealment of their vices, and who often vied with the monarch himself in haughtiness and grandeur; for the support of the army, ever engaged in extravagant wars, and employed to keep the people in servitude —all these taxes so enormous as to sink the mass of the people in the lowest state of poverty, debasement, and misery, fell upon the unprivileged class alone.

Taxes ran into every thing. The minister who could invent a new tax was applauded as a man of genius. All the offices of the magistracy were sold. Judges would pay an enormous sum for their office, and remunerate themselves a hundred-fold by selling their decisions. Thus justice became a farce. Titles of nobility were sold, which, introducing the purchaser into the ranks of the privileged class, threw the heavier burden upon the unprivileged. All the trades and professions were put up for sale. Even the humble callings of making wigs, of weighing coal, of selling pork, were esteemed privileges, and were sold at a high price. There was hardly any thing which a man could do, which he was not compelled to buy the privilege of doing. A person who undertook to count the number of these offices or trades for which a license was sold, growing weary of his task, estimated them at over three hundred thousand.[30]

An army of two hundred thousand tax-gatherers devoured every thing. To extort substance from the starving people the most cruel expedients were adopted. All the energies of galleys, gibbets, dungeons, and racks were called into requisition. When the corn was all absorbed, the cattle were taken. The ground, exhausted for want of manure, became sterile. Men, women, and children yoked themselves to the plow. Deserts

extended, the population died off, and beautiful France was becoming but a place of graves.

The people thus taxed owned but one third of the soil, the clergy and the nobles owning the other two thirds. From this one third the people paid taxes and feudal service to the nobles, tithes to the clergy, and imposts to the king. They enjoyed no political rights, could take no share in the administration, and were ineligible to any post of honor or profit. No man could obtain an office in the army unless he brought a certificate, signed by four nobles, that he was of noble blood.

The imposition of the tax was entirely arbitrary. No man could tell one year what his tax would be the next. There was no principle in the assessment except to extort as much as possible. The tax-gatherers would be sent into a district to collect one year one million of francs, perhaps the next year it would be two millions. No language can describe the dismay in the humble homes of the peasants when these cormorants, armed with despotic power, darkened their doors. The seed-corn was taken, the cow was driven off, the pig was taken from the pen. Mothers plead with tears that food might be left for their children, but the sheriff, inured to scenes of misery, had a heart of rock. He always went surrounded by a band of bailiffs to protect him from violence. Fearful was the vengeance he could wreak upon any one who displeased him.

The peasant, to avoid exorbitant taxation, assumed the garb of poverty, dressed his children in rags, and carefully promoted the ruin and dilapidation of his dwelling. "Fear," writes de Tocqueville, "often made the collector pitiless. In some parishes he did not show his face without a band of bailiffs and followers at his back. 'Unless he is sustained by bailiffs,' writes an intendant in 1764, 'the taxables will not pay. At Villefranche alone six hundred bailiffs and followers are always kept on foot.'"[31]

Indeed, the government seemed to desire to keep the people poor. Savages will lop off the leg or the arm of a prisoner that he may be more helplessly in their power. Thus those despotic kings would desolate their realms with taxation, and would excite wars which would exhaust energy and paralyze industry, that the people thus impoverished and kept in ignorance might bow more submissively to the yoke. The wars which in endless monotony are inscribed upon the monuments of history were

mostly waged by princes to engross the attention of their subjects. When a despot sees that public attention is directed, or is likely to be directed, to any of his oppressive acts, he immediately embarks in some war, to divert the thoughts of the nation. This is the unvarying resource of despotism. After a few hundred thousand of the people have been slaughtered, and millions of money squandered in the senseless war, peace is then made. But peace brings but little repose to the people. They must now toil and starve that they may raise money to pay for the expenses of the war. Such, in general, has been the history of Europe for a thousand years. Despots are willing that billows of blood should surge over the land, that the cries of the oppressed may thus be drowned.

So excessive was the burden of taxation, that it has been estimated by a very accurate computation that, if the produce of an acre of land amounted to sixteen dollars, the king took ten, the duke, as proprietor, five, leaving one for the cultivator.[32] Thus, if we suppose a peasant with his wife and children to have cultivated forty acres of land, the proceeds of which, at sixteen dollars per acre, amounted to six hundred and forty dollars, the king and the duke and the Church took six hundred of this, leaving but forty dollars for the support of the laborers.

Let us suppose a township in the United States containing twenty square miles, with five thousand inhabitants. Nearly all these are cultivators of the soil, and so robbed by taxes that they can only live in mud hovels and upon the coarsest food. Clothed in rags, they toil in the fields with their bareheaded and barefooted wives and daughters. The huts of these farmers are huddled together in a miserable dirty village. In the village there are a few shop-keepers, who have acquired a little property, and have become somewhat intelligent. There is also a physician, and a surgeon, and a poor, dispirited, half-starved parish priest. Upon one of the eminences of the town there is a lordly castle of stone, with its turrets and towers, its park and fish-pond. This massive structure belongs to the duke. Weary of the solitude of the country, he has withdrawn from the castle, and is living with his family in the metropolis, indulging in all its expensive dissipations. His purse can only be replenished by the money which he can extort from the cultivators of the land who surround his castle; and his expenses are so enormous that he is ever harassed by an exhausted purse.

For a few weeks in the summer he comes down to his castle, from the metropolis, with his city companions, to engage in rural sports. Wild boars, deer, rabbits, and partridges abound in his park. The boars and the deer range the fields of the farmers, trampling down and devouring their crops; but the farmer must not harm them, lest he incur the terrible displeasure of the duke. The rabbits and the partridges infest the fields of grain; but the duke has issued a special injunction that the weeds *even* must not be disturbed, lest the brooding partridges should be frightened away, to the injury of his summer shooting.

Perhaps one half of the land in the township belongs to the duke, and the farmers are mere tenants at will. During past ages, about half of the land has been sold and is owned by those who till it. But even they have to pay a heavy ground-rent annually to the duke for the land which they have bought. If a farmer wishes to purchase a few acres from his neighbor, he must first pay a sum to the duke for permission to make the purchase. For three or four days in the week the farmer is compelled, as feudal service, to work in the fields of the duke, without remuneration. When he has gathered in the harvest on his own land, a large portion of it he must cart to the granaries of the duke as a tax. If he has any grain to be ground, or grapes to press, or bread to bake, he must go to the mill, the wine-press, and the oven of the duke, and pay whatever toll he may see fit to extort. Often even the use of hand-mills was prohibited, and the peasant had to purchase the privilege of bruising his grain between two stones. He could not even dip a bowl of water from the sea, and allow it to evaporate to get some salt, lest he should interfere with the monopoly of the king. If he wishes to take any of his produce to market, he must pay the duke for permission to travel on the highway. Thus robbed under the name of custom and law, the farmer toils joylessly from the cradle to the grave, with barely sufficient food and shelter to keep him in respectable working order; and when he dies, he leaves his children to the same miserable doom. Such was the condition of the great mass of the French people during the long reign of Louis XV.

This intolerable bondage spread all through the minutiæ of social life. It was, of course, impossible but that the masses of the people should be in the lowest state of ignorance and indigence. Their huts, destitute of all the necessities of civilized life, were dark and comfortless, and even the

merriment with which they endeavored at times to beguile their misery was heartless, spasmodic, and melancholy.[33]

In the year 1785, Thomas Jefferson wrote from Paris to Mrs. Trist, of Philadelphia, "Of twenty millions of people supposed to be in France, I am of opinion that there are nineteen millions more wretched, more accursed in every circumstance of human existence, than the most conspicuously wretched individual of the whole United States."[34]

Again he writes, in the same year, to M. Bellini, a Florentine gentleman who was professor in William and Mary College, "I find the general state of humanity here most deplorable. The truth of Voltaire's observation offers itself perpetually, that every man here must be either the hammer or the anvil."

FOOTNOTES:

22. Madame Campan's Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, vol. i., p. 388.

23. Ib.

24. "Men of rank sold their land piecemeal to the peasantry, reserving nothing but seigneurial rents, which furnished a nominal but not a substantial competency."—*The Old Régime, De Tocqueville*, p. 103.

25. History of the French Revolution, by M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, p. 188.

26. "A lord," writes Montesquieu, bitterly, "is a man who sees the king, speaks to the minister, has ancestors, debts, and pensions."

27. The Old Régime, by De Tocqueville, p. 18.

"It is a singularity worth remarking that the Gospel is nothing but a declaration of rights. Its mysteries were a long time hidden, because they attacked the priests and the great."—*M. Rabaud de St. Etienne*, p. 174.

28. "Shall we say, then, Woe to Philosophism that it destroyed Religion, what it called 'extinguishing the abomination'—*écraser l'infâme*? Woe rather to those that made the Holy an abomination and extinguishable."—*Carlyle, French Revolution*, i., 56.

29. Old Régime, p. 175.

Count Segur, a peer of France, in his Memoirs, has very frankly described the feelings with which he and the young nobles who were his companions regarded the writings of the philosophers:

"We felt disposed to adopt with enthusiasm the philosophical doctrines professed by literary men, remarkable for their boldness and their wit. Voltaire seduced our imagination. Rousseau touched our hearts. We felt a secret pleasure in seeing that their attacks were directed against an old fabric which presented to us a Gothic and ridiculous appearance. We were pleased with

this petty war, although it was undermining our own ranks and privileges and the remains of our ancient power. But we felt not these attacks personally. It was, as yet, but a war of words and paper, which did not appear to us to threaten the superiority of existence which we enjoyed, consolidated as we thought it by a possession of many centuries."

30. History of the Revolution of France, by M. Rabaud de St. Etienne.

31. For appalling proof of the sufferings of the tax-payers, turn to the pages of Michelet, of De Tocqueville, of any writer upon the *Old Régime*.

32. Arthur Young, vol. i., p. 574; Marshall's Travels, vol. iv., p. 322.

33. "Care must be taken not to misunderstand the gayety which the French have often exhibited in the greatest affliction. It is a mere attempt to divert the mind from the contemplation of misfortune which seems inevitable."—*The Old Régime, by De Tocqueville*, p. 167.

34. Life of Jefferson, by Henry T. Randall, vol. i., p. 432.

Chapter V.
The Bastille

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Absolute Power of the King.—*Lettres de Cachet.*—The Bastille.—Cardinal Balue.—Harancourt.—Charles of Armanac.—Constant de Renville.—Duke of Nemours.—Dungeons of the Bastille.—*Oubliettes.*—Dessault.—M. Massat.—M. Catalan.—Latude.—The Student.—Apostrophe of Michelet.

The monarchy was now so absolute that the king, without any regard to law, had the persons and the property of all his subjects entirely at his disposal. He could confiscate any man's estate. He could assign any man to a dungeon for life without trial and even without accusation. To his petted and profligate favorites he was accustomed to give sealed writs, *lettres de cachet*, whose blanks they could fill up with any name they pleased. With one of these writs the courtiers could drag any man who displeased them to one of the dungeons of the Bastille, where no light of the sun would ever gladden his eyes again. Of these sealed writs we shall speak hereafter. They were the most appalling instruments of torture despotism ever wielded.

The Bastille. At the eastern entrance of Paris stood this world-renowned fortress and prison. In gloomy grandeur its eight towers darkened the air, surrounded by a massive wall of stone nine feet thick and a hundred feet high. The whole was encircled by a ditch twenty-five feet deep and one hundred and twenty feet wide. The Bastille was an object exciting universal awe. No one could ever pass beneath its shadow without thinking of the sighs which ceaselessly resounded through all its vaults. It was an ever-present threat, the great upholder of despotic power, with its menace appalling even the boldest heart. It is easy to brave death from the bullet or the guillotine; but who can brave the doom of Cardinal Balue, who, for eleven years, was confined in an iron cage, so constructed that he could find no possible position for repose; or the fate of Harancourt, who

passed fifteen years in a cage within the Bastille, whose iron bars required in their riveting the labors of nineteen men for twenty days? To be thus torn from wife, children, and home, and to be consigned for life to the unearthly woe of such a doom must terrify even the firmest soul. It is painful to dwell upon these details, but they must be known in explanation of the scenes of violence and blood to which they finally gave birth.

Charles of Armanac, for no crime whatever of his own, but because his *brother* had offended Charles XI., was thrown into prison. For fourteen years he lingered in the dungeon, until his reason was dethroned and his spirit was bewildered and lost in the woes of the maniac. Constant de Renville, a Norman gentleman, was accused, while in exile in Holland, of writing a satirical poem against France. For eleven years he was immured in one of the most loathsome dungeons of the Bastille. He appears to have been a man of true piety, and upon his release wrote an account of the horrors of his prison-house, which thrilled the ear of Europe.

The Duke of Nemours was accused of an intrigue against Louis XI. He was dragged from the presence of his wife, exciting in her such terror that she fell into convulsions and died. After two years' imprisonment he was condemned to be executed. A scaffold was erected with openings beneath the planks, and his three children were placed beneath the planks, bareheaded, clothed in white robes, and with their hands bound behind their backs, that the blood of their beheaded father might drop upon them, and that his anguish might be increased by witnessing the agony of his children. The fearful tragedy being over, these tender children, the youngest of whom was but five years of age, were again locked up in one of the gloomiest vaults of the Bastille, where they remained for five years. Upon the death of Louis XI. they were released. The two eldest, however, emaciate with privation and woe, soon died. The youngest alone survived.

Imagination can not conceive of an abode more loathsome than some of these horrible dens. The cold stone walls, covered with the mould of ages, were ever dripping with water. The slimy floor swarmed with reptiles and all kinds of vermin who live in darkness and mire. A narrow slit in the wall, which was nine feet thick, admitted a few straggling rays of light, but no air to ventilate the apartment where corruption was festering. A little straw upon the floor or upon a plank supported by iron bars fixed in the wall afforded the only place for repose. Ponderous double

doors, seven inches thick and provided with enormous locks and bolts, shut the captive as effectually from the world and from all knowledge of what was passing in the world as if he were in his grave. His arrest was frequently conducted so secretly that even his friends had no knowledge of what had become of him; they could make no inquiries at the gloomy portals of the Bastille, and the unhappy captive was left to die unknown and forgotten in his dungeon. If by any happy chance he was liberated, he was first compelled to take an oath never to repeal what he had seen, or heard, or suffered within the walls of the Bastille.

Thus any person who became obnoxious to the king or any of his favorites was immediately transferred to these dungeons of despair. Cardinal Richelieu filled its cells with the victims of his tyranny. The captive immediately received the name of his cell, and his real name was never uttered within the precincts of the Bastille.

The Bastille was often full to overflowing, but there were other Bastilles in France sufficiently capacious to meet all the demands of the most inexorable tyranny.

It is the more necessary to dwell upon these details since the Bastille was the mailed hand with which aristocratic usurpation beat down all resistance and silenced every murmur. The Bastille, with its massive walls and gloomy towers and cannon frowning from every embrasure, was the terrific threat which held France in subjection. It was the demon soul of demoniac despotism. So awful was the terror inspired, that frequently the victim was merely enjoined by one of the warrants bearing the seal of the king to go himself to the dungeon. Appalled and trembling in every nerve, he dared not for one moment disobey. Hastening to the prison, he surrendered himself to its glooms, despairingly hoping, by prompt obedience, to shorten the years of his captivity.

There were vaults in the Bastille and other prisons of France called *oubliettes*, into which the poor victim was dropped and left to die forgotten. These were usually shaped like a bottle, with a narrow neck and expanding beneath. In one of these tombs of massive stone, twenty-two feet deep and seventeen or eighteen feet in diameter, with a narrow neck through which the captive could be thrust down, the inmate was left in Egyptian darkness amid the damp and mould of ages, and, trampling upon the bones of those who had perished before him, to linger through weary

hours of starvation and woe until death came to his relief. Sometimes he thus lingered for years, food being occasionally thrown down to him.

There were twenty bastilles in France. In Paris, besides the Bastille, there were thirty prisons, where people might be incarcerated without sentence, trial, or even accusation. The convents were amply supplied with dungeons. All these prisons were at the disposal of the Jesuits. They were instruments of torture. The wretched victim, once consigned to those cells, was enshrouded by the oblivion of the tomb. The rich man was robbed of his wealth and taken there to be forgotten and to die. Beauty, whose virtue bribes could not destroy, was dragged to those apartments to minister to the lust of merciless oppressors. The shriek of despair, smothered by walls of stone and doors of iron, reached only the ear of God.[35]

During the reign of Louis XV. one hundred and fifty thousand of these *lettres de cachet* were issued, making an average of two thousand five hundred annually.[36] The king could not refuse a blank warrant to his mistress or to a courtier. All those who had influence at court could obtain them. They were distributed as freely as in this country members of Congress have distributed their postage franks. St. Florentin alone gave away fifty thousand. These writs were often sold at a great price. Any man who could obtain one had his enemy at his disposal. One can hardly conceive of a more awful despotism. Such were "*the good old times of the monarchy*," as some have insanely called them. Even during the mild reign of Louis XVI. fourteen thousand *lettres de cachet* were issued. Let us enter the prison and contemplate the doom of the captive.

A gentleman by the name of Dessault offended Richelieu by refusing to execute one of his atrocious orders. At midnight a band of soldiers entered his chamber, tore him from his bed, and dragged him through the dark streets to the Bastille, and there consigned him to a living burial in one of its cold damp tombs of iron and stone. Here in silence and solitude, deprived of all knowledge of his family, and his family having lost all trace of him, he lingered eleven years.

> "Oh, who can tell what days, what nights he spent
> Of tideless, waveless, sailless, shoreless woe!"

At last his jailer ventured to inform him that Richelieu was on a dying bed. Hoping that in such an hour the heart of the haughty cardinal might be touched with sympathy, he wrote to him as follows:

> "My lord, you are aware that for eleven years you have subjected me to the endurance of a thousand deaths in the Bastille—to sufferings which would excite compassion if inflicted even upon the most disloyal subject of the king. How much more then should I be pitied, who am doomed to perish here for disobeying an order, which, obeyed, would have sent me to the final judgment with blood-stained hands, and would have consigned my soul to eternal misery. Ah! could you but hear the sobs, the lamentations, the groans which you extort from me, you would quickly set me at liberty. In the name of the eternal God, who will judge you as well as me, I implore you, my lord, to take pity on my woe, and, if you wish that God should show mercy to you, order my chains to be broken before your death-hour comes. When that hour arrives you will no longer be able to do me justice, but will persecute me even in your grave."

The iron-hearted minister was unrelenting, and died leaving his victim still in the dungeon. There Dessault remained *fifty years* after the death of Richelieu. He was at length liberated, after having passed sixty-one years in a loathsome cell but a few feet square. The mind stands aghast in the contemplation of such woes. All this he suffered as the punishment of his *virtues*. The mind is appalled in contemplating such a doom. Even the assurance that after death cometh the judgment affords but little relief. Michelet, an unbeliever in Christian revelation, indignantly exclaims, "though a sworn enemy to barbarous fictions about everlasting punishment, I found myself praying to God to construct a hell for tyrants."

When we remember that during a single reign one hundred and fifty thousand were thus incarcerated; that all the petted and profligate favorites of the king, male and female, had these blank warrants placed in their hands, which they could fill up with any name at their pleasure; that money could be thus extorted, domestic virtue violated, and that every

man and every family was thus placed at the mercy of the vilest minions of the court, we can only wonder that the volcano of popular indignation did not burst forth more speedily and more desolatingly. It is true that in many other countries of Europe the state of affairs was equally bad, if not worse. But in France wealth and intelligence had made great advances, while in central and northern Europe the enslaved people were so debased by ignorance that they had no consciousness of the rights of which they were defrauded.

The court demanded of a rich man, M. Massat, six hundred thousand livres ($120,000). Stunned by the ruinous demand, he ventured to remonstrate. He was dragged to the Bastille, where the vermin of his dungeon could alone hear his murmurs. M. Catalan, another man of wealth, after experiencing the horrors of such an imprisonment for several months, was glad to purchase his ransom for six millions of livres ($1,200,000).[37]

The money thus extorted was squandered in the most shameless profligacy. The king sometimes expended two hundred thousand dollars for a single night's entertainment at Versailles. The terrors of the Bastille frowned down all remonstrances. A "stone doublet" was the robe which the courtiers facetiously remarked they had prepared for murmurers.

On the 1st of May, 1749, a gentleman of the name of Latude was arrested by one of these *lettres de cachet*, and thrown into the Bastille. He was then but twenty years of age, and had given offense to Madame de Pompadour, by pretending that a conspiracy had been formed against her life. For thirty-five years he remained in prison enduring inconceivable horrors. In 1784, several years after the death of both the mistress and her subject king, he was liberated and wrote an account of his captivity. It was a tale of horror which thrilled the ear of Europe. Eloquently, in view of the letters of Latude, Michelet represents the people as exclaiming,

> "Holy, holy Revolution, how slowly dost thou come! I, who have been waiting for thee a thousand years in the furrows of the Middle Ages, what! must I wait still longer? Oh, how slowly time passes! Oh, how have I counted the hours! Wilt thou never arrive?"

A young man, in a Jesuit College, in a thoughtless hour, composed a satirical Latin distich, making merry with the foibles of the professors and of the king. A *lettre de cachet* was immediately served upon him, and for *thirty-one years*, until youth and manhood were giving place to old age, he remained moaning in living burial in one of the dungeons of the Bastille. One of the first acts of the Revolution was to batter down these execrable walls and to plow up their very foundations.

In view of the facts here revealed one can not but be amazed at the manner in which many have spoken of the French Revolution, as if it were merely an outburst of human depravity. "Burke had no idea," writes De Tocqueville, "of the state in which the monarchy, he so deeply regretted, had left us." Michelet, glowing with the indignation which inflamed the bosoms of his fathers, exclaims, "Our fathers shivered that Bastille to pieces, tore away its stones with bleeding hands, and flung them afar. Afterward they seized them again, and, having hewn them into a different form, in order that they might be trampled under foot by the people forever, built with them the Bridge of Revolution."[38]

FOOTNOTES:

35. Historical View of French Revolution, by J. Michelet, i., 66.

36. History of the Bastille, Chambers' Miscellany.

37. Old Régime, p. 191.

Chapter VI.
The Court and the Parliament

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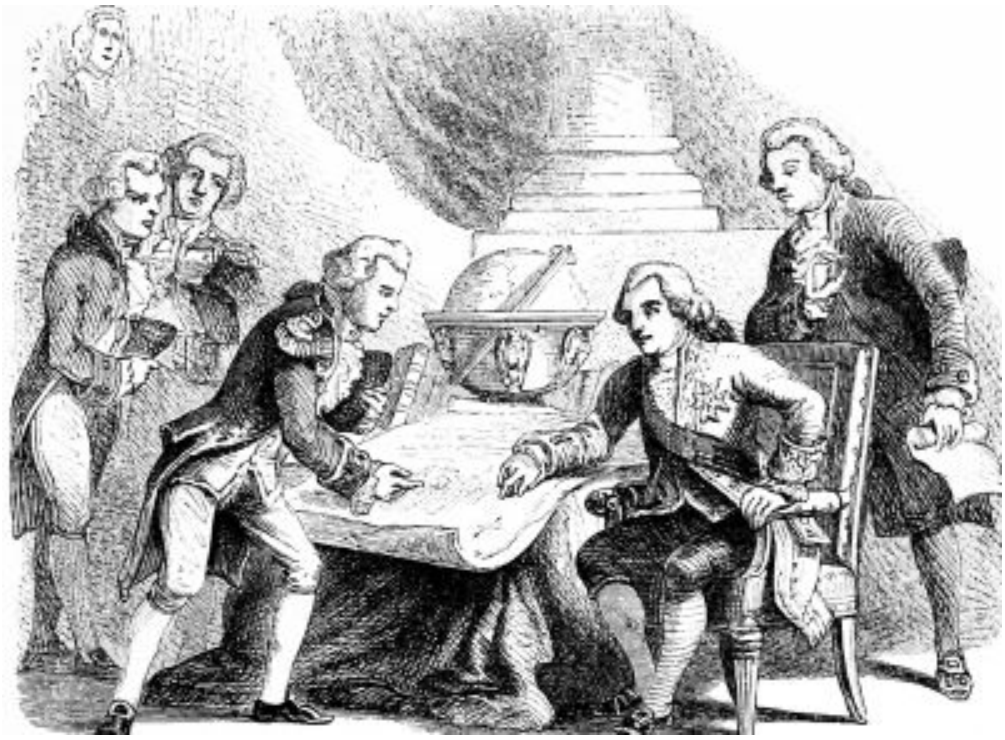
As the clock of Versailles tolled the hour of twelve at midnight of the 10th of May, 1774, Louis XV., abandoned by all, alone in his chamber, died. In the most loathsome stages of the confluent small-pox, his body had for several days presented but a mass of corruption. Terror had driven all the courtiers from the portion of the palace which he occupied, and even Madame du Barry dared not approach the bed where her guilty paramour was dying. The nurse hired to attend him could not remain in the apartment, but sat in an adjoining room. A lamp was placed at the window, which she was to extinguish as soon as the king was dead. Eagerly the courtiers watched the glimmering of that light that they might be the first to bear to Louis, the grandson of the king, the tidings that *he* was monarch of France.

Louis was then hardly twenty years of age.[39] His wife, Marie Antoinette, daughter of Maria Theresa, Queen of Austria, was scarcely nineteen. They had been married four years. Marie Antoinette was one of the most beautiful of women, but from infancy she had been educated in the belief that kings and nobles were created to illustrate life by gayety and splendor, and that the people were created only to be their servants.[40]

The taper was extinguished, and the crowd of courtiers rushed to the apartment of the Dauphin to hail him as Louis XVI. The tidings, though expected, for a moment overwhelmed them both, and, encircled in each

other's arms, they fell upon their knees, while Louis exclaimed, "*O God! guide us, protect us, we are too young to govern*."[41] They then entered the grand saloon, where they received the congratulations of all the dignitaries of the Church and the State. All were anxious to escape from the palace whose atmosphere was tainted, and hardly an hour elapsed ere the new court, in carriages and on horseback, left Versailles and were passing rapidly to the Chateau of Choisy, one of the favorite rural palaces of Louis XV. The loathsome remains of the king were left to the care of a few under-servants to be hurried to their burial.

It was not yet four o'clock in the morning. The sleepless night, the chill morning air, the awful scene of death from which they had come, oppressed all spirits. Soon, however, the sun rose warm and brilliant; a jocular remark dispelled the mental gloom, and in two hours they arrived at the palace a merry party exulting in the new reign. The education of Louis XVI. had been such that he was still but a boy, bashful, self-distrusting, and entirely incompetent to guide the kingdom through the terrific storm which for ages had been gathering. He had not the remotest idea of the perils with which France was surrounded. He was an exceedingly amiable young man, of morals most singularly pure for that corrupt age, retiring and domestic in his tastes, and sincerely desirous of promoting the happiness of France. Geography was the only branch of learning in which he appeared to take any special interest. He framed, with much sagacity, the instructions for the voyage of La Pérouse around the world in 1786, and often lamented the fate of this celebrated navigator, saying, "I see very well that I am not fortunate."[42] How mysterious the government of God, that upon the head of this benevolent, kind-hearted, conscientious king should have been emptied, even to the dregs, those vials of wrath which debauched and profligate monarchs had been treasuring up for so many reigns!



LOUIS XVI. AND LA PÉROUSE.

Louis had no force of character, and, destitute of self-reliance, was entirely guided by others. At the suggestion of his aunt, Adelaide, he called to the post of prime minister Count Maurepas, who was eighty years of age, and who, having been banished from Paris by Madame de Pompadour, had been living for thirty years in retirement. Thus France was handed over in these hours of peril to a king in his boyhood and a prime minister in his dotage. Was it chance? Was it Providence? Clouds and darkness surround God's throne!

M. Turgot was appointed to the post of utmost difficulty and danger—the administration of the finances. He had acquired much reputation by the skill with which, for twelve years, he had administered the government of the Province of Limousin. The kingdom of France was already in debt more than four thousand millions of francs ($800,000,000).[43] As the revenue was by no means sufficient to pay the interest upon this debt and the expenses of the government, new loans had been incessantly resorted to, and national bankruptcy was near at hand. To continue borrowing was ruin; to impose higher taxes upon the people impossible. There were but two measures which could be adopted. One was to introduce a reform of

wide-sweeping and rigid economy, cutting down salaries, abolishing pensions and sinecures, and introducing frugality into the pleasure-haunts of the court. Turgot was too well acquainted with the habits of the courtiers to dream that it was in the power of any minister to enforce this reform. There remained only the plan to induce the clergy and the nobles to allow themselves to be taxed, and thus to bear their fair proportion of the expenses of the state. Turgot fully understood the Herculean task before him in attempting this measure, and in a letter to the king he wrote:

> "We will have no bankruptcies, no augmentation of the taxes, no loans. I shall have to combat abuses of every kind, to combat those who are benefited by them, and even the kindness, sire, of your own nature. I shall be feared, hated, and calumniated; but the affecting goodness with which you pressed my hands in yours, to witness your acceptance of my devotion to your service, is never to be obliterated from my recollection, and must support me under every trial."[44]

Several of Turgot's measures of reform the privileged class submitted to, though with reluctance and with many murmurs; but when he proposed that a tax should be fairly and equally levied upon proprietors of every description, a burst of indignant remonstrance arose from the nobles which drowned his voice. To suggest that a *high-born* man was to be taxed like one *low-born* was an insult too grievous to be borne. The whole privileged class at once combined, determined to crush the audacious minister thus introducing the doctrine of equal taxation into the court of aristocratic privilege.

Madame du Barry, in a pet, four years before, had abolished the Parliament of Paris, which was entirely under the control of the aristocracy. Louis XVI., seeking popularity, restored the Parliament. Unfortunately for reform, the nobles had now an organized body with which to make resistance. The Parliament, the clergy, the old minister Maurepas, and even the young queen, all united in a clamorous onset upon Turgot, and he was driven from the ministry, having been in office but twenty months.[45] The Parliament absolutely refused to register the obnoxious decree. The inexperienced and timid king, frightened by the

clamor, yielded, and abandoned his minister. Had the king been firm, he might, perhaps, have carried his point; but want of capacity leads to results as disastrous as treachery, and the king, though actuated by the best intentions, was ignorant and inefficient. Though the king held a *bed of justice*,[46] and ordered the edicts registered, they remained as dead letters and were never enforced.

There was in Paris a wealthy Protestant banker, born in Geneva, of great financial celebrity, M. Necker. He was called to take the place of Turgot. Warned by the fate of his predecessor and seeing precisely the same difficulties staring him in the face, he resolved to try the expedient of economy, cutting off pensions and abolishing sinecures. But the nobles, in Church and State, disliked this as much as being taxed, and immediately their clamor was renewed.[47]

Just at this time the American war of independence commenced. All France was in a state of enthusiasm in view of a heroic people struggling to be free. And when the American delegation appeared in Paris, headed by Franklin, all hearts were swept along by a current which neither king nor nobles could withstand. The republican simplicity of Franklin in his attire and manners produced an extraordinary impression upon all classes. The French ladies in particular were lavish in their attentions. Several fêtes were given in his honor, at one of which the most beautiful of three hundred ladies crowned him with a laurel wreath, and then kissed him on both cheeks. Almost every saloon was ornamented with his bust, bearing the inscription, "Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis."

All the latent spirit of freedom which had so long been slowly accumulating burst forth with a power which alarmed the court. Not a few of the nobles, disgusted with the aristocratic oppression which was ruining France, gave their sympathies to the American cause. The Marquis la Fayette, then but eighteen years of age, openly and enthusiastically applauded the struggle of the colonists. Marie Antoinette, instinctively hating a war in which the people were contending against royalty, expressed much indignation that La Fayette should utter such sentiments in the Palace of Versailles. Joseph II. of Austria, brother of Marie Antoinette, then on a visit to the French court, was asked by a lady his opinion of the subject which was now engrossing every mind. He replied,

"I must decline answering; my business is to be a Royalist" (*Mon métier à moi c'est d'être Royaliste*).[48]

It is hardly possible for one now to realize the enthusiasm with which the American war, at that time, inspired France. Even the court hated England, and wished to see that domineering power humbled. The mind of the nation had just awakened and was thoroughly aroused from the lethargy of ages. Theories, dreams, aspirations had exhausted themselves, and yet there was in France no scope whatever for action. America opened a theatre for heroic enterprise. France had given the theory of liberty, America was illustrating that theory by practice. The popular cry so effectually drowned every other voice that even the king was compelled to yield. A treaty with America was signed which drew from the treasury of France twelve hundred millions of francs ($240,000,000), in support of American independence.[49] But for the substantial aid thus rendered by the fleet and the army of France it can hardly be doubted that the American Revolution would have been crushed, Washington and Franklin would have been hanged as traitors, and monarchical historians would elegantly have described the horrors of the great American rebellion.[50]

The king, however, had sufficient intelligence to appreciate the suicidal act he was thus compelled to perform. With extreme reluctance he signed the treaty which recognized the right of nations to change their government. The doctrine of the *sovereignty of the people* was thus legitimated in France. That one sentiment unresisted would sweep Europe of its despotic thrones. As the king signed the treaty, Feb. 8, 1778, he remarked to his minister, "You will remember, sir, that this is contrary to my opinion."[51] The same weakness which constrained Louis XVI. to abandon Turgot to his enemies, compelled him to perform this act which his views of state policy condemned. "How painful," he writes, in his private correspondence, "to be obliged, for reasons of state, to sign orders and commence a great war contrary alike to my opinions and my wishes."[52]

In the midst of these transactions Voltaire, after an absence of twenty-seven years, much of which time he had passed in his retreat at Ferney, about five miles from Geneva, revisited Paris. He was then eighty-four years of age. The court hated the bold assailer of corruptions, and refused

to receive him. But the populace greeted him with enthusiasm unparalleled. He attended the theatre where his last play, "Irene," was acted. Immediately upon his appearance the whole audience, rising, greeted him with long and tumultuous applause. As, overpowered with emotion, he rose to depart, with trembling limbs and with flooded eyes, men of the highest rank and beautiful women crowded around him and literally bore him in their arms to his carriage. He could only exclaim, "Do you wish to kill me with joy?" A crowd with lighted torches filled the streets, making his path brilliant as day, and shouts of triumph arose which appalled the courtiers in the saloons of the palace. A few weeks after this, May 30, 1778, Voltaire died. The Archbishop of Paris refused to allow him Christian burial, and the court forbade his death to be mentioned in the public journals. His corpse was taken from the city and buried secretly at an old abbey at Scellières. This petty persecution only exasperated the friends of reform. A month after the death of Voltaire, Rousseau also passed away to the spirit-land.

The situation of Necker was now deplorable. The kingdom was involved in an enormously expensive war. The court would not consent to any diminution of its indulgences, and the privileged class would not consent to be taxed. Necker was almost in despair. He borrowed of every one who would lend, and from the already exhausted people with sorrow, almost with anguish, gleaned every sou which the most ingenious taxation could extort.

"Never shall I forget," he wrote, in 1791, "the long, dark staircase of M. Maurepas, the terror and the melancholy with which I used to ascend it, uncertain of the success of some idea that had occurred to me, likely, if carried into effect, to produce an increase of the revenue, but likely at the same time to fall severely though justly on some one or other; the sort of hesitation and diffidence with which I ventured to intermingle in my representations any of those maxims of justice and of right with which my own heart was animated."

For a time Necker succeeded by loans and annuities in raising money, but at last it became more difficult to find lenders, and national bankruptcy seemed inevitable. And what is national bankruptcy? It is the paralysis of industry, and wide-spreading consternation and woe. Thousands of widows and orphans had all their patrimony in the national

funds. The failure of these funds was to them beggary and starvation. The hospitals, the schools, the homes of refuge for the aged and infirm—all would lose their support. The thousands in governmental employ and those dependent upon them would be left in utter destitution. The bankruptcy of a solitary merchant may send poverty to many families—the bankruptcy of a nation sends paleness to the cheeks and anguish to the hearts of millions.

In this exigence Necker adopted the bold resolve to publish an honest account of the state of the finances, that the nation, nobles, and unennobled might see the destruction toward which the state was drifting. Necker thought that, if the facts were fairly presented, the privileged class, in view of the ruin otherwise inevitable, would consent to bear their share of taxation, manifestly the only possible measure which could arrest the disaster. He consequently, in 1781, published his celebrated *Compte Rendu au Roi*. The impression which this pamphlet produced was amazing. Two hundred thousand copies were immediately called for, and the appalling revelation went with electric speed through the whole length and breadth of the land. It was read in the saloon, in the work-shop, and in the hamlet. Groups of those who could not read were gathered at all corners to hear it read by others.

"We wetted with our tears," writes M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, who acted an illustrious part in those days, "those pages which a citizen minister had imprinted with luminous and comfortable reflections, and where he was turning all his attention to the prosperity of the French with a sensibility deserving of their gratitude. The *people* blessed him as its savior. But all those nourished by abuses formed a confederacy against the man who seemed about to wrest their prey from them."

Necker was desirous of introducing some popular element into the government. There was now a numerous body of men belonging to the unprivileged class, energetic and enlightened, whose voice ought to be heard in the administration of affairs as representatives of the people. He therefore recommended that there should be provincial parliaments in the different departments of France, somewhat corresponding with the present legislatures in the United States. In a few of the provinces there were already parliaments, but they were composed exclusively of the privileged class. Turgot also had contemplated provincial legislatures, which he

desired to constitute as the organ of the *people*, and to be composed only of members of the Tiers Etat.[53] Necker, however, hoped to conciliate the nobles by giving the privileged body an equal representation with the unprivileged in these assemblies. One half were to be representatives of the clergy and the nobility, and the other half of the people, though the people numbered millions, while the clergy and nobles numbered but thousands.

Necker's report showed that the interest upon the public debt absorbed one third of the revenues; that the remaining two thirds were by no means sufficient for carrying on the government, and that, consequently, the burden was continually growing heavier by loans and accumulations.[54] The suggestions of Necker, to give the people a voice in the administration of affairs and to tax high-born men equally with low-born, created intense opposition. The storm became too fierce to be resisted. Both the king and the prime minister yielded to its violence, and Necker, like Turgot, was driven with contumely from the ministry and into exile. The hearts of the people followed the defeated minister to his retreat. These outrages were but making the line which separated the privileged from the unprivileged more visible, and were rousing and combining the masses. The illustrious financier, in his retirement, wrote his celebrated work upon the administration of the finances, a work which contributed much to the enlightenment of the public mind.[55] The intellect of the nation was roused, as never before, to the discussion of the affairs of state. In the parlor, the counting-room, the work-shop, the farm-house, and the field, all were employed in deliberating upon the one great topic which engrossed universal attention. And yet the nobles and their partisans, with infatuation inexplicable, resisted all measures of reform; a singular illustration of the Roman adage, "Quem Deus vult perdere priusquam dementat" (*whom God would destroy he first makes mad*).

Indeed, the opposition was sufficiently formidable to appal any minister. There were eighty thousand nobles, inheriting the pride and prestige of feudal power, with thousands, dependent upon their smiles, rallying around them as allies. There were the officers in the army, who were either hereditary nobles or, still worse, men of wealth who had purchased titles of nobility. There were a hundred thousand persons who,

in various ways, had purchased immunity from the burdens of state, and were thus within the limits of the privileged class, and hated by the people, though despised by the nobles. There were two hundred thousand priests bound by the strongest of possible ties to the hierarchy, the humble class depending for position and bread upon their spiritual lords and obliged by the most solemn oaths to obey their superiors. And these priests, intrusted with the keys of heaven and of hell, as was supposed by the unenlightened masses, held millions in subjection by the most resistless powers of superstition. There were sixty thousand in the cloisters of the monasteries, many of them dissolute in the extreme, and who were necessarily subservient to the ecclesiastics. There were the farmers general, the collectors of the revenue, and all the vast army of office-holders, who were merely the agents of the court.

"This formidable mass of men," says M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, "were in possession of all France. They held her by a thousand chains. They formed, in a body, what was termed *la haute nation*. All the rest was the people."[56]

Though the privileged class and their dependents, which we have above enumerated, amounted to but a few hundred thousand, perhaps not five hundred thousand in all, and the people amounted to some twenty-five millions, still all the power was with the aristocracy. The mass of the people were merely slaves, unarmed, unorganized, uneducated. They had been degraded and dispirited by ages of oppression, and had no means of combining or of uttering a united voice which should be heard.

Immediately succeeding M. Necker in the ministry of finance came M. Fleury and M. d'Ormesson. They were both honest, well-meaning men, but were promptly crushed by a burden which neither of them was at all capable of bearing. Their names are hardly remembered. Maurepas was now dead. The Americans, aided by France, had achieved their independence, and France and England were again at peace. The king now selected M. de Calonne from the Parliament, as Minister of Finance. He was a man of brilliant genius, of remarkably courtly manners, but licentious and extravagant. The king hoped, by his selecting Calonne, to diminish that opposition of the Parliament which was daily growing more inveterate against the crown. For a time the new minister was exceedingly

popular. His high reputation for financial skill and his suavity enabled him to effect important loans; and by the sale and the mortgage of the property of the crown he succeeded for a few months in having money in abundance. The court rioted anew in voluptuous indulgence. The beautiful palace of St. Cloud was bought of the Duke of Orleans for the queen, and vast sums were expended for its embellishment. The Palace of Rambouillet was purchased as a hunting-seat for the king. Marie Antoinette gave innumerable costly entertainments at Versailles, and rumor was rife with the scenes of measureless extravagance which were there displayed. The well-meaning, weak-minded king, having no taste for courtly pleasure and no ability for the management of affairs, either unconscious of the peril of the state or despairing of any remedy, fitted up a work-shop at Versailles, where he employed most of his time at a forge, under the guidance of a blacksmith, tinkering locks and keys. This man, Gamin, has recorded:

> "The king was good, indulgent, timid, curious, fond of sleep. He passionately loved working as a smith, and hid himself from the queen and the court to file and forge with me. To set up his anvil and mine, unknown to all the world, it was necessary to use a thousand stratagems."[57]

There is a secret power called *public credit* which will speedily bring such a career to its close. Public credit was now exhausted. No more money could be borrowed. The taxes for some time in advance were already pledged in payment of loans. The people, crushed by their burdens, could not bear any augmentation of taxes. The crisis seemed to have come. Calonne now awoke to the consciousness of his condition, and was overpowered by the magnitude of the difficulties in which he was involved. There was but one mode of redress—*an immediate retrenchment of expenses and the including of the privileged class in the assessment of taxes*. Whoever had attempted this had been crushed by the aristocratic Parliament. Could Calonne succeed? After long and anxious deliberation he became conscious that it would be impossible to induce the Parliament to consent to such a reform, that it would be very hazardous to call a meeting of the States-General, where the *people* could make their voice to

be heard, and yet it was essential to have some public body upon which he could lean for support. He therefore recommended that the king should convene an assembly of the notables, to be composed of such individuals as the king should select from the clergy, the nobles, and the magistracy, they all belonging to the privileged class. Such an assembly had never been convened since Richelieu called one in 1626.

LOUIS XVI. AS LOCKSMITH.

FOOTNOTES:

38. Historical View of the French Revolution, by J. Michelet, vol. i., p. 64.

39. Louis XVI. was born Aug. 22, 1754. In May, 1770, when not quite sixteen, he married Marie Antoinette. In May, 1774, he wanted three months of being twenty years of age. Marie Antoinette was born Nov. 2, 1755. She was but fourteen years and six months old when married. She was but eighteen years and six months old when she became Queen of France. —*Encyclopædia Americana*.

40. "It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the Queen of France at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more delightful vision! I saw

her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in, glittering like the morning star, full of life and splendor and joy."—*Burke's Reflections.*

41. Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, by Madame Campan, i., 75.

42. Encyclopædia Americana, article Louis XVI.

43. Encyclopædia Americana, article Louis XV.

44. Précis de la Revolution, par M. Lacretelle.

45. "On the very threshold of the business he must propose to make the clergy, the noblesse, the very Parliament subject to taxes! One shriek of indignation and astonishment reverberates through all the chateau galleries. M. de Maurepas has to gyrate. The poor king, who had written (to Turgot) a few weeks ago, '*Il n'y a que vous et moi qui aimions le peuple*' (There is none but you and I who love the people), must now write a dismissal, and let the French Revolution accomplish itself pacifically or not, as it can."—*Carlyle, French Revolution,* i., 41.

"The nobles and the prelates, it seems, considered themselves degraded if they were to contribute to the repair of the roads; and they would no doubt have declared that their dignity and their existence, the very rights of property itself, were endangered, if they were now, for the first time, they would have said, in the history of the monarchy, to be subjected to the visits of the tax-gatherer."—*Lectures on the French Revolution, by Wm. Smyth,* vol. i., p. 102.

46. *Lit de justice* was a proceeding in which the king, with his court, proceeded to the Parliament, and there, sitting upon the throne, caused those edicts which the Parliament did not approve to be registered in his presence.—*Encyclopædia Americana.*

47. It is not necessary to allude to De Clugny, who immediately succeeded Turgot, but who held his office six months only and attempted nothing.

48. Woman in France, by Julia Kavanagh, p. 211. Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, by Madame Campan, vol. i., p. 375.

49. Hist. Phil. de la France, par Ant. Fantin Desodoards, t. i., p. 28. Audouin states that the war cost France, from 1778 to 1782, fourteen hundred millions of livres ($280,000,000).

50. "The queen never disguised her dislike to the American war. She could not conceive how any one could advise a sovereign to aim at the humiliation of England through an attack on the sovereign authority, and by assisting a people to organize a republican constitution. She often laughed at the enthusiasm with which Franklin inspired the French."—*Madame Campan's Mem. of Marie Antoinette,* ii., 29.

51. Lectures on Fr. Rev., by Wm. Smyth, i., 109.

52. Cor. Conf. de Louis XVI., ii., 178.

53. Lectures on the French Revolution, by William Smyth, i., 115.

54. "The notion that our maladies were incapable of remedy, and that no human mind could cure them, added keenly to the general grief. We saw ourselves plunged into a gulf of debts and public engagements, the interest alone of which absorbed the third part of the revenue, and which, far from being put into a course of liquidation, were continually accumulating by loans and anticipations."—*History of the French Revolution, by M. Rabaud de St. Etienne,* vol. i., p. 19.

55. "And so Necker, Atlas-like, sustains the burden of the finances for five years long. Without wages—for he refused such—cheered only by public opinion and the ministering of his noble wife. He, too, has to produce his scheme of taxing; clergy, noblesse to be taxed—like a mere Turgot. Let Necker also depart; not unlamented."—*Carlyle, French Revolution*, vol. i., p. 46.

56. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, vol. i., p. 22.

57. Memoirs of the Reign of Louis XVI., by the Abbé Soulavie, vol. ii., p. 191.

Chapter VII.
The Assembly of the Notables

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Measures of Brienne.—The Bed of Justice.—Remonstrance of Parliament.—Parliament Exiled.—Submission of Parliament.—Duke of Orleans.—Treasonable Plans of the Duke of Orleans.—Anxiety of the Queen.—The Diamond Necklace.—Monsieur, the King's Brother.—Bagatelle.—Desperation of Brienne.—Edict for abolishing the Parliaments.—Energy of the Court.—Arrest of D'Espréménil and Goislard.—Tumults in Grenoble.—Terrific Hail-storm.

The Notables, one hundred and forty-four in number, nearly all ecclesiastics, nobles, or ennobled, met at Versailles, Jan. 29, 1787. Calonne expected that this body, carefully selected by the king, would advise that all orders should make common cause and bear impartially the burden of taxation. Sustained by the moral power of this advice he hoped that the measure could be carried into execution. He presented his statement of affairs. Though he endeavored to conceal the worst, the Notables were appalled. Three hundred and fifty millions of dollars had been borrowed within a few years, and the annual deficit was thirty-five millions of dollars.[58] Cautiously he proposed his plan of impartial taxation. It was the signal for a general assault upon the doomed minister. He was literally hooted down. Not only the Assembly of Notables, but the clergy, the Parliament, the nobles all over the realm pounced upon him, led even by the queen and the Archbishop of Paris; and Calonne, without a friend, was compelled to resign his office and to fly from France.[59]

The clergy were exceedingly exasperated against Calonne, for they deemed the proposition to tax the possessions of the Church as sacrilegious. The most active of the opponents of Calonne was Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse. He was a bold, resolute, ambitious man, and by the influence of the queen was appointed to succeed Calonne. "As public

credit was dead," said a wag, "an archbishop was summoned to bury the remains."[60] The spirit of discontent and of menace was now becoming every day more extended and alarming, and the Revolution was gaining strength.

Among the Notables thus assembled there were some warm advocates of popular liberty. La Fayette was perhaps the most conspicuous of these. He spoke boldly against *lettres de cachet* and other abuses. The Count d'Artois, afterward Charles X., reproved him for this freedom. La Fayette firmly, yet with caution, responded, "When a Notable is summoned to speak his opinion he must speak it."[61]

One of the first acts of Brienne was to abolish the Assembly of Notables.

Their session continued but nine weeks, being dissolved May 25, 1787. He then struggled for a time in the midst of embarrassments inextricable until he was compelled to propose the same measure which had already been three times rejected with scorn, and which had driven three ministers in disgrace from Paris—*the taxing of the nobles*. He did every thing in his power to prepare the way for the suggestion, and connected the obnoxious bill with another less objectionable, hoping that the two might pass together. But the clergy and the nobles were on the alert.

Two thirds of the territory of the kingdom had been grasped by the Church and the nobles. One third only belonged to the people. Brienne proposed a *territorial tax which should fall upon all landed proprietors alike*. There was an instantaneous shout of indignation from the whole privileged class, and the cry "Away with him," "Hustle him out," spread from castle to castle, and from convent to convent.

It was a *custom*, rather than a law, that no royal decree could pass into effect until it had been registered by Parliament; and it was a *custom*, rather than a law, that, if the Parliament refused to register a decree, the king could hold what is called a *bed of justice*; that is, could summon the Parliament into his presence and command the decree to be registered. As the king could banish, or imprison, or behead any one at his pleasure, no Parliament had as yet ventured to disobey the royal command.

The Parliament declined registering the decree taxing the property of the clergy and the nobles. The king peremptorily summoned the whole

refractory body to appear before him. It was the 6th of August, 1787. In a vast train of carriages, all the members, some one hundred and twenty in number, wheeled out from Paris to the Palace of Versailles. There the king with his own lips ordered them to register the decree. Obedient to the royal order it was registered, and the Parliament, sullen and exasperated, was rolled back again to the metropolis. The people contemplated the scene in silent expectation, and by thousands surrounded the Parliament on its return, and greeted them with acclamations.

Emboldened by the sympathy of the people in this conflict with the court, the Parliament ventured to enter upon its records a remonstrance against the violent procedure; and, to gain still more strength from popular approval, they made the strange assertion that Parliament was not competent to register tax edicts at all; that for this act the authority of the three estates of the realm was essential, convened in the States-General. This was, indeed, unheard of doctrine, for the Parliament had for centuries registered such decrees. It, however, answered its purpose; it brought the masses of the people at once and enthusiastically upon their side.

This call for the States-General was the first decisive step toward bringing the people into the field. Tumultuous crowds surrounded the palace where the Parliament held its session, and with clapping of hands and shouts received the tidings of the resolutions adopted. The king, indignant, issued *letters de cachet* on the night of the 14th, and the next morning the whole body was arrested and taken in carriages into banishment to Troyes, a dull city about one hundred miles from Paris. The blessings of the people followed the Parliament;[62] "for there are quarrels," says Carlyle, "in which even Satan, bringing help, were not unwelcome."

Paris was now in a state of commotion. Defiant placards were posted upon the walls, and there were angry gatherings in the streets. The two brothers of the king, subsequently Louis XVIII. and Charles X., entered Paris in state carriages to expunge from the records of the Parliament the obnoxious protests and resolutions. They came with a well-armed retinue. The stormy multitudes frowned and hissed, and were only dispersed by the gleam of the sword.

For a month Parliament remained at Troyes, excessively weary of exile. In the mean time Brienne had no money, and could raise none. Both

parties were ready for accommodation. The crown consented to relinquish the *tax upon the nobles*, and to summon the States-General in five years. Parliament consented to register an edict for a *loan* of one hundred millions of dollars, the burden of which was to fall upon the *people* alone. With this arrangement the exiled Parliament was brought back on the 20th of September. "It went out," said D'Espréménil, "covered with glory. It came back covered with mud."

On the 20th of September the king appeared before the Parliament in person, to present the edict for the loan and the promise to convoke the States-General at the close of five years.

There was at that time in Parliament a cousin of the king, the Duke of Orleans, one of the highest nobles of the realm.[63] Inheriting from his father the enormous Orleans property, and heir, through his wife, to the vast estates of the Duke of Penthièvre, he was considered the richest man in France, enjoying an income of seven million five hundred thousand francs a year ($1,500,000). For years he had been rioting in measureless debauchery. His hair was falling off, his blood was corrupted, and his bronzed face was covered with carbuncles.[64] Sated with sensual indulgence, the passion for political distinction seized his soul. As heir to the dukedom of Penthièvre, he looked forward to the office of high admiral. In preparation he ventured upon a naval campaign, and commanded the rear guard of M. d'Orvilliers' fleet in the battle off Ushant. Rumor affirmed that during the battle he hid in the hold of the ship. The court, exasperated by his haughtiness, and jealous of his power, gladly believed the story, and overwhelmed him with caricatures and epigrams. Some time after this he ascended in a balloon, and as he had previously descended a mine, where he had shown but little self-possession, it was stated that he had shown all the elements his cowardice.[65] The king withheld from him, thus overwhelmed with ridicule, the office of admiral, and conferred it upon his nephew, the son of the Count d'Artois.

The Duke of Orleans was envenomed by the affront, and breathed vengeance. While in this state of mind, and refusing to present himself at court, he received another indignity still more exasperating. A matrimonial alliance had been arranged between the eldest daughter of the Duke of Orleans and the son of Count d'Artois, the Duke d'Angoulême. An

income of four hundred thousand francs ($80,000) per annum had been settled upon the prospective bride. She had received the congratulations of the court, and the foreign ministers had been authorized to communicate to their respective courts the approaching nuptials, when Marie Antoinette, alarmed by the feeble health of her two sons, and thinking that the son of the Count d'Artois might yet become heir to the throne of France, broke off the match, and decided that her daughter, instead of the daughter of the Duke of Orleans, should marry the young Duke d'Angoulême.[66]

The Duke of Orleans was now ready to adopt any measures of desperation for the sake of revenge. Though one of the highest and most opulent of the aristocrats of Europe, he was eager to throw himself into the arms of the popular party, and to lead them in any measures of violence in their assaults upon the crown.[67]

When Louis XVI. met the Parliament to secure the registry of the edict for a new loan, a strong opposition was found organized against him, and he encountered silence and gloomy looks. The king had not intended to hold a *bed of justice* with his *commands*, but merely a royal sitting for friendly conference. But the antagonism was so manifest that he was compelled to appeal to his kingly authority, and to *order* the registry of the edict. The Duke of Orleans rose, and with flushed cheek and defiant tone, entered a protest. Two members, his confederates, ventured to sustain him. This insult royalty could not brook. The duke was immediately sent into exile to one of his rural estates, and the two other nobles were sent to prison.

A fierce conflict was now commenced between the king and the Parliament. The Parliament passed a decree condemning arbitrary arrests. The king, by an order in council, canceled the decree. The Parliament reaffirmed it. The king was exasperated to the highest degree, but, with the united Parliament and the popular voice against him, he did not dare to proceed to extreme measures. Louis XIV. would have sent every man of them to the Bastille or the scaffold. But the days of Louis XIV. were no more.

It may at first thought seem strange that in this conflict the *people* should have sided with the Parliament. But the power of the crown was the great power they had to dread, and which they wished to see humbled. It

was to them a matter of much more moment that the *despotism of the court* should be curtailed than that the one act of taxation should be passed in their favor. Men of far-reaching sagacity must have guided the populace to so wise a decision. Inequality of taxation was but one of the innumerable wrongs to which the people were exposed. What they needed was a thorough reform in the government which should correct *all* abuses. To attain this it was first indispensable that despotism should be struck down. Therefore their sympathies were with the Parliament in its struggle against the crown, though it so happened that the conflict arose upon a point adverse to the popular interest.

The Duke of Orleans began seriously to contemplate the dethronement of his cousin and the usurpation of the crown. With almost boundless wealth at his command, and placing himself at the head of the popular party, now rising with such resistless power, he thought the plan not difficult of accomplishment. He had traveled in England, had invested large sums there, had formed friendship with the sons of the king, the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. The court of St. James was bitterly exasperated against the court of Louis XVI. for aiding in the emancipation of America. The Duke of Orleans consequently doubted not that he could rely upon the friendship of England in the introduction of a new dynasty to France.[68]

And now the parliaments which had been organized in many of the provinces made common cause with the Parliament of Paris, and sent in their remonstrances against the despotism of the crown. Gloom now pervaded the saloons of Versailles. Marie Antoinette, with pale cheek and anxious brow, wandered through the apartments dejected and almost despairing. Groves and gardens surrounded her embellished with flowers and statues and fountains. The palace which was her home surpassed in architectural grandeur and in all the appliances of voluptuous indulgence any abode which had ever before been reared upon earth. Obsequious servants and fawning courtiers anticipated her wishes, and her chariot with its glittering outriders swept like a meteor through the enchanting drives which art, aided by the wealth of a realm, had constructed, and yet probably there was not a woman in the whole realm, in garret or hut or furrowed field, who bore a heavier heart than that which throbbed within

the bosom of the queen. The king was a harmless, inoffensive, weak-minded man, spending most of his time at the forge. It was well understood that the queen, energetic and authoritative, was the real head of the government, and that every act of vigor originated with her. She consequently became peculiarly obnoxious to the Parliament, and through them to the people; and Paris was flooded with the vilest calumnies against her.

There was at that time fluttering about Versailles a dissolute woman of remarkable beauty, the Countess Lamotte. She forged notes against the queen, and purchased a very magnificent pearl necklace at the price of three hundred thousand dollars. Cardinal Rohan was involved in the intrigue. The transaction was noised through all Europe. The queen was accused of being engaged in a swindling transaction with a profligate woman to cheat a jeweler, and was also accused of enormous extravagance in wishing to add to the already priceless jewels of the crown others to the amount of three hundred thousand dollars. The queen was innocent; but the public mind exasperated wished to believe all evil of her. Men, haggard and hungry, and without employment; women ragged and starving, and with their starving children in their arms, were ever repeating the foul charge against the queen as a thief, an accomplice with a prostitute, one who was willing to see the people starve if she might but hang pearls about her neck. The story was so universally credited, and created such wide-spread exasperation, that Talleyrand remarked, "Mind that miserable affair of the necklace. I should be nowise surprised if it should overturn the French monarchy."

In addition to all this the report was spread abroad that the children of Marie Antoinette were illegitimate; that the king had not sufficient capacity to reign; that his next brother, called Monsieur, subsequently Louis XVIII., was engaged in a conspiracy with the Parliament to eject Louis XVI. from the throne, and to establish a government of the nobles, of which Monsieur should be the nominal head. It is by no means improbable that this plan was formed. It will account for many of the actions of the nobles during the first stages of the Revolution.[69]

The second brother of the king, Count d'Artois, a very elegant and accomplished man of fashion, fond of pleasure, and with congenial tastes

with the young and beautiful queen, was accused, though probably without foundation, of being her paramour and the father of her children. He had erected, just outside the walls of Paris, in the woods of Boulogne, a beautiful little palace which he called *Bagatelle*. This was the seat of the most refined voluptuousness and of the most costly indulgence.

The queen now knew not which way to turn from the invectives which were so mercilessly showered upon her. It was in vain to attempt an answer. Her lofty spirit so far sustained her as to enable her in public to appear with dignity. But in her boudoir she wept in all the anguish of a crushed and despairing heart. "One morning at Trianon," writes Madame Campan, "I went into the queen's chamber when she was in bed. There were letters lying upon her bed and she was weeping bitterly. Her tears were mingled with sobs, which she occasionally interrupted by exclamations of '*Ah! that I were dead. Wretches! monsters! what have I done to them?*' I offered her orange-flower-water and ether. '*Leave me, if you love me; it would be better to kill me at once.*' At this moment she threw her arm over my shoulder and began weeping afresh."[70]

Parliament had registered the edict for a loan of one hundred millions of dollars. It would be no burden to them. The people alone were to be taxed for the debt. But public credit was dead. No one would lend. Brienne was also assailed with lampoons and caricatures and envenomed invectives, until, baited and bayed from every direction, he became almost distracted.[71] Burning with fever and with tremulous nerves, he paced his chamber-floor, ready for any deed of desperation which could extricate him from his woe. All this the Parliament in Paris and the twelve parliaments in the departments enjoyed, for it was the object of the nobles, who mainly formed these bodies, to wrest back from the monarchy that feudal power which energetic kings had wrested from them. The people were ready to sustain the nobles, though their enemies, in their attack upon the crown, and the nobles were also eager to call in the people to aid them in their perilous conflict. Some of the nobles, however, more far-sighted, strongly opposed the calling of the States-General. The majority, however, prevailed, and decreed to call a meeting of the states, but with the proviso that five years were to elapse before they should be convened.

Brienne was now goaded to desperation. He determined to break down the parliaments. Secretly he matured a plan for the formation of a series of minor courts, where all small causes could be tried, and a superior court for registering edicts. Thus there would be absolutely nothing left for the parliaments to do, and they could be abolished as useless. These courts, the superior to be called the *Plenary Court* and the others *Grand Bailliages*, were to be composed of courtiers carefully selected, who would be subservient to the wishes of the king.[72]

It was a shrewd measure, but one which required the strictest secrecy in its execution. Such a coup d'état must come as a sudden stroke, or so powerful a body as the Parliament would be able to ward off the blow. The whole kingdom was then divided into a number of provinces, over each of which a governor, called an intendant, presided, appointed by the king. The royal edict was to be placed secretly in the hands of each of these intendants, with minute directions how to act, and they were promptly and secretly to organize the courts, so that upon an appointed day all should be accomplished, the new machinery in motion, and the power of the parliaments annihilated. So important was it that profound secrecy should be observed that printers were conveyed in disguise by night to one of the saloons of Versailles, where they brought their type and put up their press to print the royal edict. Sentries stood at the doors and the windows of their work-room and their food was handed in to them. M. d'Espréménil, one of the most active and influential members of Parliament, suspecting some stratagem, succeeded, through a bribe of twenty-five hundred dollars, in obtaining a copy of the edict. In the greatest excitement he hastened back to Paris and presented himself in Parliament with the edict in his hand. It was the 3d of May, 1788. The members listened with breathless eagerness to the reading of the paper, which was to their body a death-warrant. The edict required all the military to be assembled on the appointed day, ready for action. The intendants were to march an armed force to those cities of the provinces where parliaments had been in session, and, when the new courts were to be organized, to enforce the decree. None of the intendants or commanders of the troops knew what was to be done, but confidential agents of the king were to be sent to all

these places, that at the same day and on the same hour the order might be received and executed all over France.

There succeeded this reading at first a universal outbreak of indignation. They then took an oath to resist, at the peril of their lives, all measures tending to the overthrow of the old French parliaments. The tidings that the plot had been detected were borne speedily to the court at Versailles. Fierce passion now added fury to the battle. Two *lettres de cachet* were issued to seize D'Espréménil and another active member of the opposition, Goislard, and silence them in the Bastille. Warned of their danger they escaped through scuttles and over the roofs of houses to the Palace of Justice, dispatched runners in every direction to summon the members, and then, laying aside their disguise, assumed their robes of office. An hour had not elapsed ere Parliament was in session and all Paris in commotion. Parliament immediately voted that the two members should not be given up, and that their session was permanent and subject to no adjournment until the pursuit of the two victims was relinquished. All the avenues of the Palace of Justice were inundated with a throng of excited citizens, bewildered by this open and deadly antagonism between the Parliament and the court. All the day and all the night and all the next day, for thirty-six hours, the session of stormy debate and fierce invective continued. Again gloomy night settled down over sleepless Paris. But suddenly there was heard the roll of drums and the bugle-blast and the tramp of armed men. Captain d'Agoust, at the head of the royal troops, marched from Versailles with infantry, cavalry, and artillery. Sternly and rapidly by torch-light the soldiers advanced, clearing their way through the multitudes crowding the court-yards and avenues of the Palace of Justice.[73]

At the head of a file of soldiers with gleaming bayonets and loaded muskets, D'Agoust, a soldier of cast-iron face and heart, mounted the stairs, strode with the loud clatter of arms into the hall, and demanded, in the name of the king, M. Duval d'Espréménil and M. Goislard de Monsabert. As he did not know these persons he called upon them to come forward and surrender themselves. For a moment there was profound silence, and then a voice was heard, "We are all D'Espréménils and

Monsaberts." For a time there was great tumult, as many voices repeated the cry.

Order being restored, the president inquired whether D'Agoust will employ violence. "I am honored," the captain replies, "with his majesty's commission to execute his majesty's order. I would gladly execute the order without violence, but at all events I shall execute it. I leave the senate for a few minutes to deliberate which method they prefer." With his guard he left the hall.

After a brief interval the sturdy captain returned with his well-armed retinue. "We yield to force," said the two counselors, as they surrendered themselves. Their brethren gathered around their arrested companions for a parting embrace, but the soldiers cut short the scene by seizing them and leading them down, through winding passages, to a rear gate, where two carriages were in waiting. Each was placed in a carriage with menacing bayonets at his side. The populace looked on in silence. They dared not *yet* speak. But they were learning a lesson. D'Espréménil was taken to an ancient fortress on one of the Isles of Hieres, in the Mediterranean, about fourteen miles from Toulon. Goislard was conveyed to a prison in Lyons.

D'Agoust, having dispatched his prisoners, returned to the Hall of Assembly, and ordered the members of Parliament to disperse. They were compelled to file out, one hundred and sixty-five in number, beneath the bayonets of the grenadiers. D'Agoust locked the doors, put the keys into his pocket, and, with his battalions, marched back to Versailles.

The Parliament of Paris was now turned into the street. But still there was no money in the treasury. The provincial parliaments were roused, and had matured their plans to resist the new courts. The 8th of May arrived, when the decree, now every where promulgated, was to be put into execution. The intendants and the king's commissioners found, at all points, organized opposition. The provincial noblesse united with the parliaments, for it was now but a struggle of the nobility against the unlimited power of the crown. A deputation of twelve was sent from the Parliament of Breton, with a remonstrance, to Versailles. They were all consigned to the Bastille. A second deputation, much larger, was sent. Agents of the king met them, and, by menaces, drove them back. A third, still more numerous, was appointed, to approach Versailles by different roads. The king refused to receive them. They held a meeting in Paris, and

invited La Fayette and all patriotic Bretons in Paris to advise with them.[74] This was the origin of the Jacobin Club.

Eight parliaments were exiled. But at Grenoble they refused to surrender themselves to the *lettres de cachet*. The tocsin pealed forth the alarm, and booming cannon roused the masses in the city and upon the mountains to rush, with such weapons as they could seize, to protect the Parliament. The royal general was compelled to capitulate and to retire, leaving his commission unexecuted. The nobles had appealed to the masses, and armed them to aid in resisting the king, and thus had taught them their power. It seems as though supernatural intelligence was guiding events toward the crisis of a terrible revolution. Four of the parliaments were thus enabled to bid defiance to the kingly power.

The attempt to establish the new courts was a total failure. The clergy, the nobility, and the people were all against it. A universal storm of hatred and contempt fell upon all who accepted offices in those courts. The Plenary Court held but one session, and then expired amid the hisses of all classes. The king seemed suddenly bereft of authority.

"Let a commissioner of the king," says Weber, "enter one of these parliaments to have an edict registered, the whole tribunal will disappear, leaving the commissioner alone with the clerk and president. The edict registered and the commissioner gone, the whole tribunal hastens back to declare such registration null. The highways are covered with deputations of the parliaments, proceeding to Versailles to have their registers expunged by the king's hand, or returning home to cover a new page with new resolutions still more audacious."[75]

Still there was no money, and Brienne was in despair. Wistfully he looked to his embowered chateau at Brienne, with its silent groves and verdant lawn. There, while these scenes were transpiring, had sat, almost beneath the shadow of his castle, "a dusky-complexioned, taciturn boy, under the name of Napoleon Bonaparte." This boy, forgetful of the sports of childhood, was gazing with intensest interest upon the conflict, and by untiring study, night and day, was girding himself with strength to come forth into the arena. He had already taken his side as the inexorable foe of feudal privilege and the friend of popular rights. He had already incurred the frown of his teachers for the energy with which he advocated in his

themes the doctrine of equality. "The themes of Napoleon," said one of his teachers, "are like flaming missiles ejected from a volcano."

In these fearful scenes, ominous of approaching floods and earthquakes, God, in the awful mystery of his providence, took an energetic part. On the 13th of July of this year, 1788, the whole country, for one hundred and twenty miles around Paris, was laid waste by one of the most frightful hail-storms which ever beat down a harvest. Not a green blade was left. Gaunt famine was inevitably to stride over distracted, impoverished France. Consternation oppressed all hearts. It was now hastily decided that the States-General should be assembled in the following month of May. The queen was that day standing at one of the windows of Versailles, pallid, trembling, and lost in gloomy thought. She held in her hand a cup of coffee, which, mechanically, she seemed to sip. Beckoning to Madame Campan, she said to her,

> "Great God! what a piece of news will be made public to-day. The king grants States-General. 'Tis a first beat of the drum of ill omen for France. This noblesse will ruin us."[76]

Brienne, who now occupied the post of prime minister, wrote to M. Necker entreating him to return to the post of Controller of the Finance. Necker refused. He was not willing to take charge of the finances with Brienne prime minister. Bankruptcy, with its national disgrace and wide-spreading misery, was at hand. On the 16th of August an edict was issued that all payments at the royal treasury should be made three fifths in cash, and the remaining two fifths in promissory notes bearing interest. As the treasury was without credit the notes were comparatively valueless. This was virtual bankruptcy, in which the state offered to pay sixty cents on the dollar. The announcement of this edict rolled another surge of excitement and consternation over the kingdom.

Count d'Artois called upon the queen and informed her of the terrible agitation pervading the public mind. She sat down in silence and wept. Brienne, pale, haggard, and trembling, frightened by the storm now raging, having contrived to secure for himself property to the amount of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars a year, gave in his resignation, entered

his carriage and drove off to Italy, leaving the king to struggle alone against the Revolution.[77]

During these conflicts for power between the king and the nobles the moan of twenty-five millions crushed beneath the chariot-wheels of feudal aristocracy ascended, not unheeded, to the ear of Heaven. The hour of retribution if not of recompense approached. For weary ages the people had waited for its coming with hope ever deferred. Generation after generation had come and gone, and still fathers and mothers, sons and daughters were toiling in the furrows and in the shop, exclaiming, "O God, how long!" The dawn after the apparently interminable night was now at hand, but it was the dawn not of a bright but of a lurid day. France at this time presented the spectacle of millions in misery, of some thousands obtaining by the severest toil the bare necessaries of life, and of a few hundred rioting in wealth and luxury.

FOOTNOTES:

58. Histoire Philosophique de la Revolution de France, par Ant. Fantin Desodoards, t. i., p. 58.

59. "Calonne has published a work on the French Revolution. At the end of it he gives an outline of his plan. Nothing can be more reasonable; and it remains an eternal indictment on the people of consequence then in France, more particularly on that part of them that composed the Assembly of Notables."—*Lectures on the French Revolution, by Wm. Smyth*, vol. i., p. 122.

60. Montgaillard, vol. i., p. 300.

61. There was at this time a nominal tax of two twentieths upon all incomes, which the clergy and the nobility were to pay as the rest. They contrived, however, in a great measure to evade this tax. "The princes of the blood, for example," says Bouillé, in his Memoirs, "who enjoyed among them from twenty-four to twenty-five millions yearly ($5,000,000), paid for their two twentieths only 188,000 livres ($37,600) instead of 2,400,000 ($480,000). The Duke of Orleans, who presided over the committee to which I belonged in the Assembly of the Notables, said to me, one day, after a deliberation in which we had considered and approved the establishment of provincial administrations, 'Are you aware, sir, that this pleasantry will cost me at least 300,000 livres ($60,000) a year?' 'How is that, my lord?' I asked. 'At present,' he replied, 'I arrange with the intendants, and pay pretty nearly what I like. The provincial administrations, on the contrary, will make me pay what is strictly due.'"—*Bouillé's Memoirs*, p. 41.

62. "This body at first courageously sustained the blow which had fallen upon them. But soon men accustomed to the pleasures of Paris threw aside the mask of stoicism which they had assumed, and redeemed themselves from exile by promising to adopt the views of the court, provided that no new taxation was proposed."—*Desodoards*, vol. i., p. 68.

63. The Marquis of Ferrières, a noble of high rank, was a deputy of the nobles. He was a warm patron of the old opinions and customs, and voted perseveringly with the majority of his order. In his very interesting Memoirs he writes thus of the Duke of Orleans, upon whom, of course, he could not look with a partial eye. "The duke was himself without talents, and debased by a life of drunkenness; greedy of money to a degree that would have been perfectly reprehensible in a private man, but which was disgraceful and degrading in a prince. He had every vice which can make crime odious, and none of the brilliant qualities by which it can be in some degree illustrated in the eyes of posterity. The dead feelings of the duke it was necessary to animate in some way or other, that he might appear to have a wish for something, and so they held out to him the supreme power, under the title of lieutenant-general of the kingdom; all the public money at his disposal, and in the event, which it was for him to hasten, the crown for his children, and himself thus made the commencement of a new dynasty."

64. Carlyle, French Revolution, vol. i., p. 48.

65. Biographie Moderne.

"Off Ushant some naval thunder is heard. In the course of which did our young prince hide in the hold! Our poor young prince gets his opera plaudits changed into mocking tehees, and can not become Grand Admiral—the source to him of woes which one may call endless."—*Carlyle, French Revolution*, vol. i., p. 43.

66. This was the princess who subsequently experienced such terrible suffering in the prison of the Temple, with her brother, the dauphin. She was released by Napoleon, and afterward married the Duke d'Angoulême.

67. Desodoards, vol. i., p. 28. Thiers, vol. i., p. 23.

68. Desodoards, vol. i., p. 50.

69. Histoire Phil. de la Rev. de Fr. par Ant. Fantin Desodoards, vol. i., p. 45.

70. Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, by Madame Campan, vol. i., p. 243.

71. "Paris is what they call in figurative speech flooded with pamphlets (*regorgé des brochures*), flooded and eddying again. Hot deluge from so many patriot ready-writers, all at the fervid or boiling point; each ready-writer now in the hour of eruption going like an Iceland geyser! Against which what can a judicious friend, Morellet, do; a Rivarol, an unruly Linguet (well paid for it), spouting *cold*?"—*Carlyle*, vol. i., p. 91.

72. Montgaillard, tome i., p. 405.

73. The following was the commission of D'Agoust: "J'ordonne au sieur d'Agoust, capitaine de mes gardes françaises, de se rendre au palais à la tête de six companies, d'en occuper toutes les avenues, et d'arrêter dans la grand chambre de mon parlement, ou partout aillieurs, messieurs Duval d'Espréménil et Goislard, conseillers, pour les remettre entre les mains des officiers de la prévôte de l'hôtel."—*Desodoards*, tome i., p. 82.

74. Carlyle, vol. i., p. 101.

75. Weber, vol. i., p. 275.

76. Campan, vol. iii., p. 104.

Chapter VIII.
The Appeal to the People

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Recall of Necker.—Reassembling the Notables.—Pamphlet of the Abbé Sièyes.—Vote of the King's Brother.—His supposed Motive.—The Basis of Representation.—Arrangements for the Meeting of the States.—Statement of Grievances.—Mirabeau: his Menace.—Sympathy of the Curates with the People.—Remonstrance of the Nobles.—First Riot.—Meeting of the States-General.—New Effort of the privileged Classes.

The king again turned to Necker, as one strong in the confidence of the people. The announcement of his recall filled France with enthusiasm. Guns were fired, bells rung, and masses of people surged through the streets of Paris and of Versailles, shouting exultingly. It was the 24th of August, 1788. Necker's first exclamation, at the intimation of his recall, was, "Ah! that I could recall the fifteen months of the Archbishop of Toulouse." He found but two hundred and fifty thousand francs ($50,000) in the treasury. Though disorder and ruin had made rapid progress, the reputation of Necker was such that he immediately had loans offered him, and the public funds rose thirty per cent.[78]

Preparations were immediately made for the assembling of the States-General, and the public announcement was given that it was to be convened on the 27th of April. There had been no meeting of the States-General for one hundred and seventy-five years, and the question now rose, How shall the members be elected? who shall be voters? of how many shall the body be composed? what proportion shall be from the privileged and what from the unprivileged class? The learned bodies and popular writers were invited to express their views upon these points. Thousands of political pamphlets immediately appeared, and every mind in the nation was roused.[79] The all-important and most agitating question was, What proportion shall the people occupy in this assembly? The

unprivileged class composed ninety-eight hundredths of the nation; the privileged class two hundredths. And yet the privileged class demanded inexorably that they should have two thirds of the representatives, and the people one third. This would place the people in a hopeless minority, and leave them entirely at the mercy of the privileged class.

To settle these agitating questions the Notables were again summoned on the 6th of September, 1788. It was the same body which Calonne had called together. Parliament had firmly declared in favor of allowing the people a representation of but one third, giving the nobles a third and the clergy a third. The king and Necker were fully assured that such an arrangement could by no means satisfy the nation—that it would be a mockery of the people which would only exasperate them. They hoped that these Notables, carefully selected, though from the aristocracy, would be willing to give ninety-eight of the people at least an equal voice with two of the aristocracy.

The Abbé Sièyes had written a pamphlet which had produced a profound impression throughout France. He thus asked, and answered, three questions: "What is the Third Estate? The whole people. What has it hitherto been in our form of government? Nothing. What does it want? To become something."

But the Notables were now alarmed, and a warm discussion ensued between the advocates of ancient traditions and of national justice. One alone of the several committees into which the Notables were divided voted in favor of allowing the people an equal representation with the privileged classes. Monsieur, afterward Louis XVIII., was chairman of that committee. When the king was informed of this vote he remarked, "Let them add my vote: I give it willingly."[80] After a month's session, the Notables, on the 12th of December, having accomplished nothing, vanished, to appear no more forever.

The question was still unsettled, and the clamor was growing louder and more exciting. It was a vital struggle. To give the people an equal voice was death to aristocratic usurpation. To give the privileged class two votes, to the people one, hopelessly perpetuated abuses. The question could only be settled by the authority of the king. On the 27th of December Necker made a report to the king recommending that the

unprivileged class should send the same number of delegates as the privileged.[81] In accordance with this report, on the 24th of January, 1789, the royal edict was issued.[82] The dissatisfaction on the part of the nobles amounted almost to rebellion. In Brittany the nobles, who had sent in a strong protest, refused to send any delegates to the States-General, hoping probably that the nobles and the clergy generally would follow their example, and that thus the measure might be frustrated.

But events ran onward like the sweep of ocean tides. Nothing could retard them. Preparations were made for the elections. Among the people every man over twenty-five years of age who paid a tax was allowed to vote.[83] A more sublime spectacle earth has rarely witnessed. Twenty-five millions of people suddenly gained the right of popular suffrage. Between five and six millions of votes were cast. The city of Paris was divided into sixty districts, each of which chose two electors, and these electors were to choose twenty deputies. The people were also enjoined to send in a written statement of their grievances, with instructions to the deputies respecting the reforms which they wished to have introduced. These statements of grievances, now existing in thirty-six compact folio volumes, present appalling testimony to the outrages which the people had for ages been enduring. With propriety, dignity, and marvelous unanimity of purpose the people assembled at the polls.[84]

There were a few of the nobles who were in favor of reform. In Provence the nobility in their provincial parliament protested against the royal edict, declaring that such innovations as were contemplated tended to "impair the dignity of the nobility." One of their number, Count Mirabeau, ventured to remonstrate against this arrogance, and to advocate the rights of the people. He was a man of extraordinary genius and courage, and before no mortal or assemblage of mortals could his eye be compelled to quail. He persisted and stood at bay, the whole Parliament, in a tumult of rage, assailing him. With amazing powers of vituperative eloquence he hurled back their denunciations, and glared upon them fiercely and unconquerably. He was a man of Herculean frame, with a gigantic head, thickly covered with shaggy locks, and he would have been an exceedingly handsome man had not his face been horribly scarred with the small-pox. He was a man of iron nerve and soul, and knew not what it

was to fear any thing. Like most of the noblesse and the higher clergy, he had lived a dissolute life. The parliamentary assembly, in a storm of wrath, expelled him from their body. He left the house, but in departing, in portentous menace, exclaimed:

> "In all countries and in all times the aristocrats have implacably pursued every friend of the people; and with tenfold implacability if such were himself born of the aristocracy. It was thus that the last of the Gracchi perished by the hands of the Patricians. But he, being struck with the mortal stab, flung dust toward heaven and called on the avenging deities; and from this dust there was born Marius—Marius, not so illustrious for exterminating the Cimbri, as for overturning in Rome the tyranny of the nobles."[85]

Mirabeau now threw himself into the arms of the Third Estate. That he might more perfectly identify himself with them, he hired a shop, it is said, in Marseilles, and put up his sign—*Mirabeau, Woolen-draper*. By such influences he was elected deputy by the Third Estate both at Aix and at Marseilles. With enthusiasm was he elected—with ringing of bells, booming of cannon, and popular acclaim. He decided to accept the election of Aix. His measureless audacity was soon called into requisition to repel the haughtiness of the court.[86]

The nobles had obtained the decision that the people should not be allowed the secret ballot, but should vote with an audible voice. They cherished the hope that inferior people so dependent upon the higher and wealthy classes, would not venture openly to vote in opposition to the wishes of their superiors.[87] It was thought that the nobles might thus be able to control the popular election. To render this more certain, the people, in their primary assemblies, were only to choose *electors*; and these electors were to choose the delegates. Thus then was a double chance for intimidation and bribery.

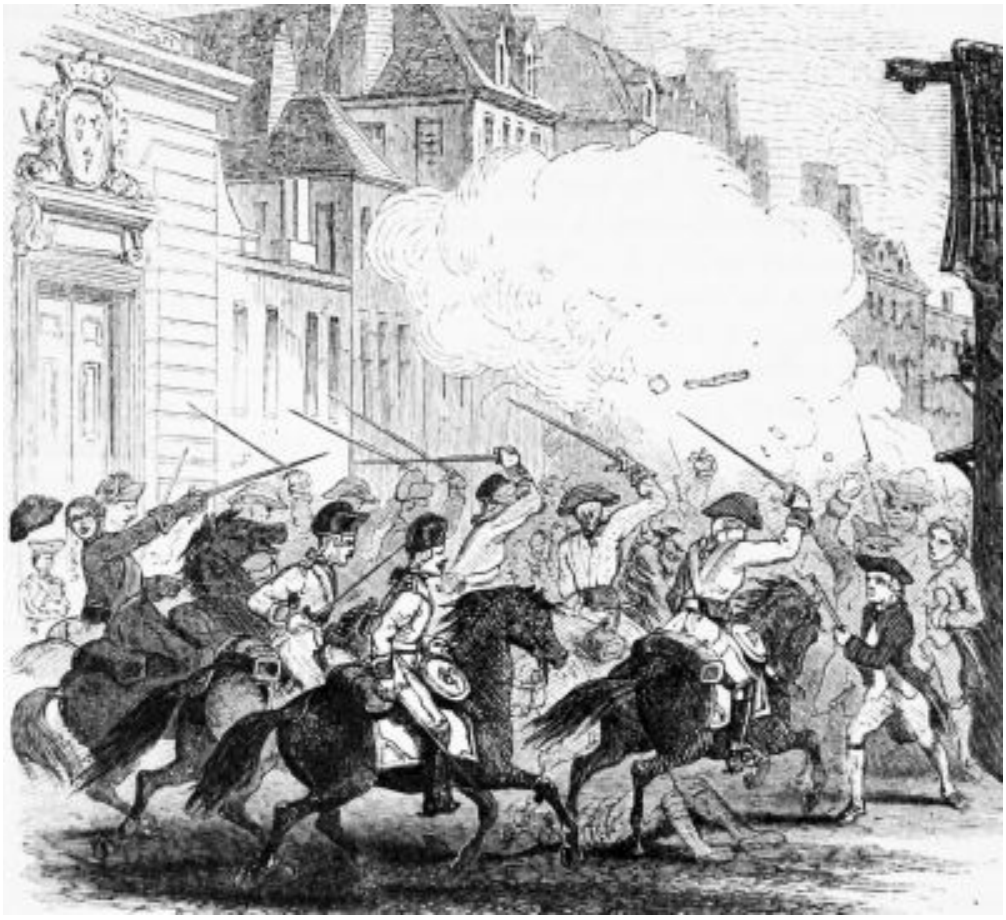
But the people had made progress in intelligence far beyond the conceptions of the nobles. They had an instinctive perception of their rights, and, in the presence of their frowning lords, unawed, yet respectfully, they chose electors who would be true to the popular cause.[88]

Thus the nobles not only failed in introducing an aristocratic element into the popular branch, but, much to their chagrin, they found a very powerful popular party thrown into the order of the clergy.[89] The higher offices in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, which gave the possessor vast revenue and no labor, were generally in the hands of nobles, haughty, intolerant, united in all their sympathies with their brethren of the privileged class. But the curates, the pastors of the churches, who preached, and visited the rich, and instructed the children, working hard and living in penury, came from the firesides of the people. They were familiar with the sufferings of their parishioners, and their sympathies were warmly with them. Many of these curates were men of unaffected piety. Nearly every writer upon the Revolution is compelled to do them justice.[90]

It had been decided that the States-General should consist of twelve hundred members. The people were consequently to choose six hundred, and the clergy and nobility six hundred. But, as the three orders held their elections separately, the two privileged classes were entitled to three hundred each. Two hundred curates were chosen as representatives of the clergy. And though these parish ministers were much overawed by their ecclesiastical superiors, and would hardly venture openly to vote in contradiction to their wishes, still both nobles and bishops understood that they were in heart with the people. There was also a very small minority among the nobles who were advocates of the popular cause, some from noble impulses, like La Fayette, and some from ignoble motives, like the Duke of Orleans. Thomas Jefferson, who was at this time in Paris, wrote four days after the opening of the States-General to Mr. Jay, "It was imagined the ecclesiastical elections would have been generally in favor of the higher clergy; on the contrary, the lower clergy have obtained five sixths of these deputations. These are the sons of peasants, who have done all the drudgery of the service for ten, twenty, and thirty guineas a year, and whose oppressions and penury, contrasted with the pride and luxury of the higher clergy, have rendered them perfectly disposed to humble the latter."

These facts, and the harmony with which the inexperienced multitude took this first great step toward national regeneration, excited throughout aristocratic Europe amazement and alarm. Kings and nobles alike

trembled. All the states of Europe, like France, were oppressed by feudal despotism. All the people of Europe might, like the French, demand reform. The formidable aspect which this popular unity of thought and action presented struck such terror that many of the leading nobles of France combined, among whom was Count d'Artois, brother of the king, afterward Charles X., and wrote a menacing letter to the king, to induce him to break his pledge and forbid the meeting of the States.[91]



FIRST RIOT IN THE FAUBOURG ST. ANTOINE.

It was now, however, too late to retract. The train was in motion and could not be stopped. The meeting had been appointed for the 27th of April, but was postponed until the 4th of May. Another effort, and one still more desperate, was now made to prevent the meeting. By bribery, secret agents, and false rumors, a riot was fomented in Paris. It was apparently judged that if fifty thousand men could be turned loose into the streets, starving and without work, to pillage and destroy, it would authorize the

concentration of the army at Paris; the deluded rioters could be easily shot down, and it could plausibly be affirmed that public tranquility required the postponement of the meeting of the States. The mob was roused by secret instigators. Guns were skillfully placed here and there, which they could seize. Two cart-loads of paving-stones were placed in their way. For twenty-four hours a tumultuous mass of people were left to do as they pleased, apparently waiting for the tumult to gain strength.

But the effort was a failure; it proved but an artificial mob, and the outbreak almost died of itself. One house, that of M. Reveillon, was sacked, and the wine-bottles from his cellar distributed through the streets. At length the soldiers were called in, and at the first discharge of the guns the riot was quelled. How many were shot down by the discharge of grapeshot is uncertain. The court made a foolish endeavor to exaggerate the disturbance, and represented that the people were ferocious in violence. Others, on the popular side, represented that multitudes were assembled from curiosity to see what was going on, that the streets were swept with grapeshot, and that hundreds of innocent spectators were cut down. M. Bailly, on the contrary, says, that the rioters fled as soon as the soldiers appeared, and that no one was injured.

The court did not venture to prosecute inquiries respecting the outbreak.[92]

The cold winds of winter were now sweeping over France. All the industrial energies of the nation were paralyzed. The loss of the harvest had created a general famine, and famine had introduced pestilence. Men, women, and children, without number, wandered over the highways, and by a natural instinct flocked to Paris. The inhabitants of the city looked appalled upon these multitudes, with haggard faces and in rags, who crowded their pavements. They could not be fed, and starving men are not willing to lie down tranquilly and die when they have strong arms to seize that food which the rich can obtain with money. The eloquent and impassioned writers of the day had fully unveiled to the nation the abuses which it had for ages endured, and yet the people, with wonderful patience and long-suffering, were quietly waiting for the meeting of the *States-General*, as the only means for the redress of their grievances.

On the 4th of May, 1789, the States-General were convened at Versailles. The clergy and the nobility appeared, by royal decree, magnificently attired in purple robes emblazoned with gold, and with plumed hats. The deputies of the Third Estate were enjoined to present themselves in plain black cloaks and slouched hats, as the badge of their inferiority.[93] On Saturday, the 2d of May, the king gave a reception, in the magnificent audience-chamber of the palace, to the delegates. When one of the nobles or of the high clergy presented himself both of the folding doors were thrown open as his name was announced; but when one of the Third Estate was presented one door only was thrown back. This studied indignity was of course annoying to men who were really the most distinguished in the realm, and who were conscious of their vast superiority to the corrupt and decaying aristocracy.[94]

THE THREE ORDERS.

On the Paris Avenue at Versailles there was an immense hall called the *Salle des Menus*, which no longer exists. It was sufficiently large to contain the twelve hundred deputies, and in whose spacious galleries and wide side-aisles four thousand spectators could be assembled. It was a magnificent hall, and was ornamented for the occasion with the highest embellishments of art. Here the king could meet all the deputies of the three orders. But the nobles and the clergy had already formed the plan still to keep the power in their own hands by insisting that the States should meet in three separate chambers and give three separate votes. Thus three hundred nobles and three hundred clergy would give two votes, and six hundred of the people but one. This was the last chance for the privileged class to retain their domination, and this battle they would fight to desperation. The people were equally determined not to be thus circumvented. The privileged class, resolved upon the accomplishment of their plan, had prepared for themselves two smaller halls, one for the nobility and one for the clergy.

FOOTNOTES:

77. Brienne, in addition to the Archbishopric of Toulouse, was appointed Archbishop of Sens, and Louis XVI. obtained for him from Pius VI. a cardinal's hat. The Cardinal of Loménie as he was then called, subsequently returned to France, where he was arrested, and, Feb. 19, 1794, was found dead on the floor of his cell, in the 67th year of his age.—*Enc. Am.*

78. Alison, Hist. of Europe, vol. i., p. 63.

79. "For, behold, this monstrous twenty-million class, hitherto the dumb sheep which these others had to agree about the sheering of, is now also arising with hopes! It has ceased or is ceasing to be dumb. It speaks through pamphlets. It is a sheer snowing of pamphlets, like to snow up the government thoroughfares."—*Carlyle*, vol. i., p. 112.

80. Labaume, vol. ii., p. 323.

It was supposed that the Count of Provence, afterward Louis XVIII., was then intriguing to gain popularity, that he might dethrone his brother and take his place. "Le Comte de Provence," writes Villaumé, "intrigoit et profitait des fautes du roi, pour se frayer un chemin vers le trône."—*Hist. de Rev. Fr., par Villaumé*, vol. i., p. 13.

81. Rapport fait au Roi dans son Conceil, le 27 Décembre, 1788.

82. The edict convening the States contained the following sentiments: "We have need of the concourse of our faithful subjects to aid in surmounting the difficulties arising from the state of the finances, and establishing, in conformity with our most ardent desire, a durable order in the parts of government which affect the public welfare. We wish that the three estates should

confer together on the matters which will be exhibited for their examination. They will make known to us the wishes and grievances of the people in such a way that, by a mutual confidence and exchange of kindly offices between the king and the people, the public evils should, as rapidly as possible, be remedied.

"For this purpose we enjoin and command that immediately upon the receipt of this letter, you proceed to elect deputies of the three orders, worthy of confidence from their virtues and the spirit with which they are animated; that the deputies should be furnished with powers and instructions sufficient to enable them to attend to all the concerns of the state, and introduce such remedies as shall be deemed advisable for the reform of abuses, and the establishment of a fixed and durable order in all parts of the government, worthy of the paternal affections of the king, and of the revolutions of so noble an assembly."—*Calonne, Etat de la France*, p. 315.

83. Michelet, vol. i., p. 75.

84. "I am convinced that those societies (as the Indians) who live without government, enjoy in their general mass an infinitely greater degree of happiness than those who live under the European governments. Among the former public opinion is in the place of law, and restrains morals as powerfully as laws ever did any where. Among the latter, under the pretense of governing, they have divided their nations into two classes—wolves and sheep. I do not exaggerate."—*Thomas Jefferson. Life by Henry S. Randall*, vol. i., p. 464.

85. Tils Adoptif, vol. v., p. 256.

86. Art. Mirabeau, Biographie Moderne.

87. "The popular assemblies were to vote by acclamation (*à haute voix*). They did not suppose that inferior people in such a mode of election, in presence of the nobles and Notables, would possess sufficient firmness to oppose them—enough assurance to pronounce other names than those which were dictated to them."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 76.

88. "The long-looked-for has come at last; wondrous news of victory, deliverance, enfranchisement, sounds magical through every heart. To the proud strong man it has come whose strong hands shall be no more gyved. The weary day-drudge has heard of it; the beggar with his crust moistened in tears. What! to us also has hope reached—down even to us? Hunger and hardship are not to be eternal? The bread we extorted from the rugged glebe, and with the toil of our sinews reaped, and ground, and kneaded into loaves, was not wholly for another then, but we shall cut of it and be filled?"—*Carlyle*, vol. i., p. 118.

89. "The prelates and dignified clergy felt the utmost disquietude at the number of curés and ecclesiastics of inferior rank who attended them as members of the States-General. It was evident, from their conversation, habits, and manners, that they participated in the feelings of the *Tiers Etat*, with whom they lived in constant communication; and that the unjust exclusion of the middling ranks from the dignities and emoluments of the Church had excited as much dissatisfaction in the ecclesiastical classes as the invidious privileges of the noblesse had awakened in the laity."—*Alison's History of Europe*, vol. i., p. 68.

90. Michelet, vol. i., p. 77. Desodoards, vol. i., p. 135. Rabaud, vol. i., p. 41. De Tocqueville, Old Régime, vol. i., p. 144.

91. Michelet, vol. i., p. 78. Mémoire présenté au Roi par Monseigneur Compte d'Artois (Charles X.), M. le Prince de Condé, M. le Duc de Bourbon, M. le Duc d'Enghien, et M. le Prince de

Conti.

92. It has been denied that the nobles were guilty of this act. For proof see Mémoires de Bensenval, tome ii., p. 347; L'Œuvre des Sept Jours, p. 411; Exposé Justificatif; Bailly's Mémoires, tome ii., p. 51. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne writes: "If the agents of despotism devised this infernal stratagem, as was afterward believed, it makes one crime more to be added to all those of which despotism had already become guilty."

93. "A hall had been hastily got ready; the costumes were determined upon, and a humiliating badge had been imposed upon the *Tiers Etat*. Men are not less jealous of their dignity than of their rights. With a very just pride the instructions forbade the deputies to condescend to any degrading ceremonial."—*Thiers*, vol. i., p. 35.

94. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, vol. i., p. 43.

Chapter IX.
Assembling of the States-General

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On the 4th of May, 1789, the day of the opening of the States-General, a solemn procession took place. Nearly all Paris flocked out to Versailles, which is but ten miles from the metropolis, and countless thousands from the surrounding regions crowded the avenues of the city of the court. The streets were decorated with tapestry. The pavements, balconies, and house-tops were covered with spectators. Joy beamed from almost every face,[95] for it was felt that, after a long night, a day of prosperity was dawning. The court, the clergy, and the nobles appeared in extraordinary splendor; but, as the procession moved along, it was observed that the eyes of the multitude, undazzled by the pageant of embroidered robes and nodding plumes, were riveted upon the six hundred deputies of the people, in their plain garb—the advance-guard of freedom's battalions. They were every where greeted, as they moved along, with clapping of hands and acclaim which seemed to rend the skies.

"Rapturous, enchanting scene!" exclaims Ferrières, "to which I faintly strive to do justice. Bands of music, placed at intervals, filled the air with melodious sounds. Military marches, the rolling of the drums, the clang of trumpets, the noble chants of the priests, alternately heard without discordance, without confusion, enlivened this triumphal procession to the temple of the Almighty."

On their arrival at the church, the three orders were seated on benches placed in the nave. The king and queen occupied thrones beneath a canopy of purple velvet sprinkled with golden *fleur de lis*. The princes and princesses, with the great officers of the crown and the ladies of the palace, occupied conspicuous positions reserved for them by the side of their majesties. After the most imposing ceremonies, and music by a majestic choir, "unaccompanied by the din of instruments," the Bishop of Nancy preached a sermon enforcing the sentiment that religion constitutes the prosperity of nations.[96]

It was a noble discourse, replete with political wisdom and Christian philosophy. The two can never be dissevered. In glowing colors he depicted the vices of the financial system, and showed the misery and demoralization which it necessarily brought upon the people. "And it is," said he, "in the name of a good king, of a just and feeling monarch, that these miserable exactors exercise their acts of barbarism." This sentiment, so complimentary to the personal character of the king, so denunciatory of the institutions of France, was received with a general burst of applause, notwithstanding the sacredness of the place, and the etiquette of the French court, which did not allow applause in the presence of the king even at the theatre.[97] With these religious ceremonies the day was closed.

The next day, May 5th, the court and all the deputies of the three orders were assembled in the great hall, to listen to the instructions of the king. And here, again, the deputies of the people encountered an insult. A particular door was assigned to them, a back door which they approached by a corridor, where they were kept crowded together for several hours, until the king, the court, the nobles, and the clergy had entered in state at the great door, and had taken their seats. The back door was then opened, and the deputies of the people, in that garb which had been imposed upon them as a badge of inferiority, were permitted to file in and take the benches at the lower end of the hall which had been left for them.[98]

As they entered, the galleries were filled with spectators. The king and queen were seated upon a throne gorgeously decorated. The court, in its highest splendor, nearly encircled the throne. The nobility and the clergy, with plumes and robes of state, occupied elevated seats. All eyes were fixed upon the deputies as they entered one by one, plainly dressed, with

slouched hat in hand. Mirabeau, in particular, attracted universal observation. He was not only by birth and blood an aristocrat, but he was an aristocrat in taste and manners. The spirit of revenge had driven him into the ranks of the people. As he strode along the aisle to his seat, he turned a threatening glance to the plumed and embroidered noblesse, from whose seats he had been driven, and a smile, haughty and bitterly menacing, curled his lips.[99]

The king's speech was favorably received. He appeared before the representatives with dignity, and recited very appropriately the cordial and conciliatory words which Necker had placed in his mouth. On finishing his speech, he sat down and put on his plumed hat. The clergy and the nobles, in accordance with custom, did the same. But to their astonishment, the Third Estate also, as by an instinctive simultaneous movement, placed their slouched hats upon their heads. The nobles, amazed at what they deemed such insolence of the people, shouted imperiously, "Hats off, hats off!" But the hats remained, as if glued to the head. The king, to appease the tumult, again uncovered his head. This necessitated the nobles and the clergy to do the same. Immediately the Third Estate followed their example, and, for the remainder of the session, all sat with uncovered heads.[100] When the last States-General met, the Third Estate were compelled to throw themselves upon their knees in the presence of the king, and to address him only upon their knees.[101]

When Necker arose to speak, all eyes were riveted and all ears were on the alert. As the organ of the king and his council, the minister was to communicate the real opinions and intentions of the court. The clergy and the nobility were agreeably disappointed; but the people, on their back benches, listened silent and sorrowful. They heard none of those noble ideas of equality and liberty which they were ready to receive with enthusiastic acclaim. Necker was evidently trammeled by the king, the court, and the nobles, now uniting in the feeling that the rising power of the Third Estate must be repressed. Thus ended the second day.

Mirabeau had commenced a journal, to contain, for popular information, a record of the proceedings of the States-General. The court promptly issued a decree prohibiting the publication of this journal, and also prohibiting the issuing of any periodical without permission of the

king. A rigid censorship of the press was thus re-established, and the deputies were excluded from all effectual communication with their constituents. This was another measure of folly and madness. It led individual members to issue written journals, which were read in the saloons, the clubs, and at the corners of the streets to excited multitudes, and it induced thousands to crowd the spacious galleries of the hall to listen to the debates. Thus the speakers were animated by the presence of four thousand of the most earnest of the people, eager to applaud every utterance in behalf of popular liberty. The public mind was also increasingly irritated by the petty persecution; so much so, that at length the king thought it not safe to enforce the decree, and the defiant Mirabeau soon resumed the publication of his journal, under the title of *Letters to my Constituents*.[102]

The next day the deputies of the Third Estate at the appointed hour repaired to the hall; but they found there none either of the clergy or of the nobles. These two parties, resolved to perpetuate the division of orders, had met in their respective halls and had organized as distinct bodies. The Third Estate, assuming the name of the Commons, abstained from any organic measures and waited to be joined by their colleagues. Thus matters continued for several days. Every effort was made on the part of the clergy and nobles to ensnare the Commons into some measure which would imply their organization as the Third Estate, but all was in vain. Assuming that they were a meeting of citizens assembled by legitimate authority to wait for other citizens that they might organize a political assembly, they merely chose a temporary chairman for the preservation of order, and *waited*.[103]

Here, then, the vital question was to be decided whether the States-General should compose one body where the majority should rule, or three separate bodies where two could unite, a perpetual majority, against one. Upon this question the whole issue of reform was suspended. All equally understood the bearings of the question, and all equally saw that there was no room for compromise. It was a death-struggle. If united in one assembly the *people* would have a majority, and could maintain popular rights. If there were three bodies the people would be in a hopeless minority, having two against them. The attention of all France was

engrossed by the conflict, and the nation, with all its interests paralyzed, began to grow impatient of the delay. "The nobles," M. Bailly writes, "decreed that the deliberation by order, and the power of each order to put a veto on the proceedings of the other two, were part of the very constitution of the monarchy, and that they must maintain them as the defenders of the throne and freedom. What a strange decree! The representatives of about two hundred thousand individuals, or more, who are nobles take upon themselves to decide, and in their own favor, a question that concerns twenty-five millions of men. They assume for themselves the right of the veto; they declare the powers and the principles of the constitution; and who are they more than others who thus declare?"[104]

During this protracted conflict the higher clergy cunningly devised the following plan to place the Commons in a false position: They sent an imposing delegation, headed by the Archbishop of Aix, with a pathetic allusion to the miseries of the people, and entreated the Commons to enter into a conference to assuage their sufferings. The snare was shrewdly contrived. If the Commons assented, it was the commencement of business with three chambers; if they refused, the clergy would apparently be those alone who regarded the starving population. For a moment there was much embarrassment.

A young man rose in the Assembly, who was unknown to nearly all the members, and in a calm, distinct, deliberate voice, which arrested universal attention, said:

> "Go, tell your colleagues that we are waiting for them here to aid us in assuaging the sorrows of the people; tell them no longer to retard our work; tell them that our resolution is not to be shaken by such a stratagem as this. If they have sympathy for the poor, let them, as imitators of their Master, renounce that luxury which consumes the funds of indigence, dismiss those insolent lackeys who attend them, sell their gorgeous equipages, and with these superfluities relieve the perishing. We wait for them here."[105]

The snare was adroitly avoided. There was a universal hum of approval, and all were inquiring the name of the young deputy. This was the first public appearance of Maximilian Robespierre.[106]

At last, on the 27th of May, twenty-two days after the convening of the States, the Commons sent a deputation to the halls of the clergy and of the nobility, urging them, in the name of the God of peace, to meet in the hall of the Assembly to deliberate upon the public welfare. This led to a series of conferences and of suggested compromises from the king and the court which continued for a fortnight, and all of which proved unavailing. At last, on the 10th of June, Mirabeau arose, and said,

> "A month is passed.[107] It is time to take a decisive step. A deputy of Paris has an important motion to make. Let us hear him."

The Abbé Sièyes[108] then rose and proposed to send a last invitation to the other orders to join them; and, if they refused, to proceed to business, not as a branch of the convention, but as the whole body. The proposition was received with enthusiasm. This was on Wednesday. As the next day, Thursday, was appropriated to religious solemnities, Friday, the 12th, was fixed upon as the day in which this important summons was to be sent.[109]

This last appeal was sent in the following words, which the committee from the Commons were charged to read to the clergy and the nobles, and a copy of which they were to leave with them:

> "Gentlemen, we are commissioned by the deputies of the Commons of France to apprise you that they can no longer delay the fulfillment of the obligation imposed on all the representatives of the nation. It is assuredly time that those who claim this quality should make themselves known by a common verification of their powers, and begin at length to attend to the national interest, which alone, and to the exclusion of all private interests, presents itself as the grand aim to which all the deputies ought to tend by one general effort. In consequence, and from the necessity which the representatives of the nation are under to proceed to business,

> the deputies of the Commons entreat you anew, gentlemen, and their duty enjoins them to address to you, as well individually as collectively, a last summons to come to the hall of the States, to attend, concur in, and submit like themselves to the common verification of powers. We are, at the same time, directed to inform you that the general call of all the bailliages convoked will take place in an hour; that the Assembly will immediately proceed to the verification, and that such as do not appear will be declared defaulters."

This summons, so bold and decisive, excited not a little consternation in both of the privileged bodies. The curates among the clergy received the message with applause, and were in favor of immediate compliance. But their ecclesiastical superiors held them in check, and succeeded in obtaining an adjournment.

The Commons waited the hour, and then proceeded to the examination of the credentials of the deputies. This occupied three days. On the first day three of the curates came from the clergy and united with them. They were received with enthusiasm. On the second day six came, on the third ten, and then it was announced that one hundred and forty were coming in a body. This excited thorough alarm with all the high dignitaries of Church and State. "The aristocracy," says Thiers, "immediately threw itself at the feet of the king. The Duke of Luxembourg, the Cardinal de la Rochefoucault, the Archbishop of Paris, implored him to repress the audacity of the *Tiers Etat* and to support their rights which were attacked. The Parliament proposed to him to do without the States, *promising to assent to all the taxes*. The king was surrounded by the princes and the queen. This was more than was requisite for his weakness. They hurried him off to Marly in order to extort from him a vigorous measure."

This state of things had secured perfect reconciliation between the court and the aristocracy. The lines were now distinctly drawn; the king, nobles, and clergy on one side, the people on the other. The excitement in Paris during this protracted conflict was very great. A large wooden tent was erected in the garden of the Palais Royal, where a crowd was almost constantly gathered to receive the news brought by couriers from Versailles. At every street corner, in every café, the subject was discussed.

Almost every hour produced a pamphlet. "There were thirteen issued to-day," writes Arthur Young, "sixteen yesterday, ninety-two last week." In the mean time the court was concentrating the troops from all parts of the kingdom around Paris and Versailles, and a hundred pieces of field artillery menaced the two cities.

It was now necessary to give the Assembly a name, a name which should define its functions. The assumption that they were the nation would be bold and defiant. The admission that they were but a *branch* of the national representation would be paralyzing. The Assembly was impelled to prompt and decisive action by the apprehension, universally entertained, that the court might employ the army, now assembled in such force, to arrest the principal deputies, dissolve the States, and, if the people of Paris manifested any opposition, to surround the city and starve them into subjection. Sièyes, in a celebrated pamphlet which he had issued to prepare the public mind for this movement, had said, "The Third Estate alone, they affirm, can not form the States-General. Well! so much the better; it shall compose a National Assembly." A body which, by universal admission represented ninety-six hundredths of the nation, might with propriety take the name of National.[110]

Upon the morning of the 17th of June, after a long and animated discussion of the preceding day, the Commons met to decide this all-important question. The king, the court, and the aristocracy were greatly alarmed. If this bold, resolute body were the *nation*, what were they? Nothing. The people were intensely excited and animated. Thousands in every conceivable vehicle flocked out from Paris to Versailles. The galleries of the vast hall, rising like an amphitheatre, were crowded to their utmost capacity. The building was surrounded and the broad avenues of Versailles thronged with the excited yet orderly multitude.

The members had but just assembled when the president, Bailly, was summoned to the chancellor's office to receive a message from the king. It was well understood that this message would be a regal prohibition for them to do any thing without the concurrence of the three orders. The Assembly immediately, with firmness, postponed the reception of the message until the vote then before them was taken. Again they were interrupted by a communication from the nobles, who in their alarm made

a desperate endeavor to thwart the proceedings. But the Assembly calmly and firmly proceeded, and by a vote of four hundred and one against ninety declared themselves the National Assembly.

In the presence of four thousand spectators the deputies then arose, and with uplifted hands took the oath of fidelity. As with simultaneous voice they pronounced the words "*We swear*," a burst of acclamation rose from the galleries, which was caught by those outside the door and rolled along the streets like reverberating thunder. "Vive le Roi! Vive l'Assemblée Nationale!" was the cry which came from gushing hearts, and thousands in intensity of emotion bowed their heads and wept.

A more heroic deed than this history has not recorded. It was a decisive movement. It gave the people an organization and arrayed them face to face against royalty and aristocracy. The king, the court, the nobles, and the higher clergy were all against them. They were surrounded with armies. They were unarmed and helpless, save in the righteousness of their cause. They were menaced with all the terrors of exile, the dungeon, and the scaffold; but, regardless of all these perils, faithful to the sacred cause of popular liberty, they pledged in its support their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. Even Alison, the unrelenting foe of popular rights, the untiring advocate of aristocratic assumption, is constrained to say,

> "It is impossible to refuse a tribute of admiration to those intrepid men, who, transported by a zeal for liberty and the love of their country, ventured to take a step fraught with so many dangers, and which, to all appearance, might have brought many to prison or the scaffold. Few situations can be imagined more dignified than that of Bailly, crowning a life of scientific labor with patriotic exertion, surrounded by an admiring assembly, the idol of the people, the admiration of Europe."

FOOTNOTES:

95. "Like the nation, I was full of hope, hope that I then could not suppose vain. Alas! how can one now think without tears on the hopes and expectations then every where felt by all good

Frenchmen, by every friend of humanity!"—*Necker on the French Revolution.*

96. "The *Tiers Etat* numbered among its members a great proportion of the talent and almost all the energy of France. The leading members of the bar, of the mercantile and medical classes, and many of the ablest of the clergy were to be found in its ranks."—*Alison*, vol. i., p. 69.

97. France and its Revolutions, by Geo. Long, Esq., p. 2.

98. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, vol. i., p. 47.

99. Madame de Staël.

100. Histoire Parlementaire, vol. i., p. 356.

101. "Who would believe that this mad court remembered and regretted the absurd custom of making the Third Estate harangue on their knees? They were unwilling to dispense from this ceremony expressly, and preferred deciding that the President of the Third Estate should make no speech whatever."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 88.

102. Procès verbal des électeurs redigé par Bailly et Duveyrier, t. i., p. 34.

103. "The chairman was M. Bailly, a simple and virtuous man, an illustrious and modest cultivator of the sciences, who had been suddenly transported from the quiet studies of his closet into the midst of civil broils. Elected to preside over a great assembly, he had been alarmed at his new office, had deemed himself unworthy to fill it, and had undertaken it solely from a sense of duty. But, raised all at once to liberty, he found within him an unexpected presence of mind and firmness. Amid so many conflicts, he caused the majesty of the assembly to be respected, and represented it with all the dignity of virtue and reason."—*Thiers*, vol. i., p. 42.

104. Indignantly Desodoards exclaims, "The descendants of the Sicumbrians, or of I know not what savages, who ages ago came prowling from the forests of Germany, could they assume at the end of eighteen centuries that their blood was more pure than that which flowed in the veins of the descendants of the Gauls, or the Romans, the ancient inhabitants of France? Do they pretend that they are nobles because they are conquerors? Then we, being now more powerful, have only to drive them across the Rhine, and in our turn we shall be conquerors and consequently nobles."-*Histoire Philosophique de la Revolution de France, par Ant. Fantin Desodoards, Citoyen Français.*

105. "What a spectacle for France! Six hundred inorganic individuals, essential for its regeneration and salvation, sit there on their elliptic benches longing passionately toward life, in painful durance, like souls waiting to be born. Speeches are spoken, eloquent, audible within doors and without. Mind agitates itself against mind; the nation looks on with ever deeper interest. Thus do the Commons deputies sit incubating."—*Carlyle*, vol. i., p. 148.

106. Bailly's Mémoires, t. i., p. 114.—*Dumont, Souvenirs, etc.*, vol. i., p. 59.

107. "A month lost! One month in open famine. Observe that in this long expectation the rich kept themselves motionless, and postponed every kind of expenditure. Work had ceased. He who had but his hands, his daily labor to supply the day, went to look for work, found none—begged—got nothing—robbed. Starving gangs overran the country."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 93.

108. The Abbé Sièyes was one of the deputies sent by the Third Estate from Paris, and the only clergyman in their delegation.

109. Sièyes' motion was to *summon* the privileged. By vote of the Assembly the word was changed to invite.—*France and its Revolutions, by G. Long, Esq.*, p. 12.

"The Assembly," writes M. Bailly, its president, "deliberating after the verification of its powers, perceives that it is already composed of representatives sent directly by ninety-six hundredths, at least, of the whole nation. Nothing can be more exact than this assertion. The four hundredths that are absent, but duly summoned, can not impede the ninety-six hundredths that are present.

"The Assembly will never lose the hope of uniting in its bosom all the deputies that are now absent; will never cease to call upon them to fulfill the obligation that has been imposed upon them of concurring with the sitting of the States-General. At whatever moment the absent deputies may present themselves in the session about to open, the Assembly declares beforehand that it will hasten to receive them, to share with them, after the verification of their powers, the continuance of the great labors which can not but procure the regeneration of France."

110. Necker estimated the Third Estate at ninety-*eight* hundredths of the population.

Chapter X.
The National Assembly

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First Acts of the Assembly.—Confusion of the Court.—Hall of the Assembly closed.—Adjournment to the Tennis-court.—Cabinet Councils.—Despotic Measures.—The Tennis-court closed.—Exultation of the Court.—Union with the Clergy.—Peril of the Assembly.—The Royal Sitting.—Speech of the King.

The first measure adopted by the National Assembly was worthy of itself. It was voted that the taxes already decreed, though not legally assessed by the consent of the nation, should be punctiliously paid. Instead of repudiating the enormous public debt, they appropriated it as their own and placed it under the safeguard of the nation. They then appointed a committee immediately to attend to the distresses of the people, and to devise measures for their relief. How vast the contrast between this magnanimity of the people and the selfishness and corruption of the court, as developed through ages! Thus terminated the eventful 17th of June, 1789, which may almost be considered the birthday of the nation of France. Before this event the *people* had hardly a recognized existence. Though the cradle of its infancy has been rocked with storms, and though in its advancing manhood it has encountered fearful perils and the sternest conflicts, yet its progress is surely onward to dignity and repose.

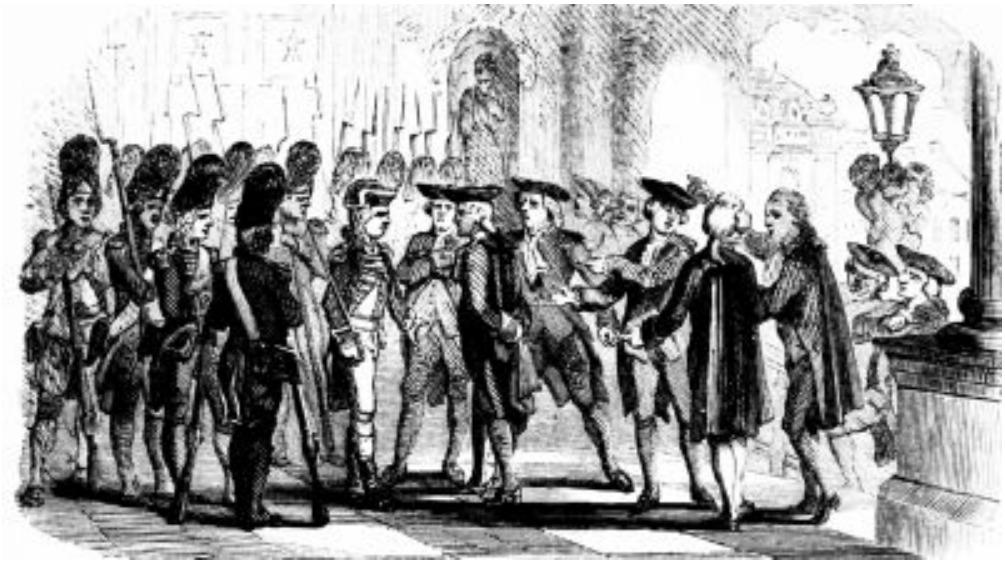
At an early hour the Assembly adjourned. Couriers from the hall hastened to expectant Paris with the glad tidings. The most fervid imagination can not conceive the joyful enthusiasm which the intelligence excited in the metropolis and throughout France. The king and his court were at this time a few miles from Versailles, in the Palace of Marly. The clergy and the nobles, in consternation, sent a committee of their most prominent members to implore the interposition of the royal power.[111] But the king had not sufficient nerve for so decisive an act. It was urged that

the nobility and the clergy should immediately combine in forming a united body which should constitute an upper house; and thus naturally the kingdom would have fallen into a monarchy like that of England, with its House of Lords and its House of Commons. This would have been a most salutary reform, and would have prepared the way for the gradual and safe advance of the nation from servitude to freedom. But, with madness almost inconceivable, the high nobility with contempt repelled all idea of union.[112] They deemed it a degradation to form a permanent association with the lower clergy and with men who had been within a few centuries ennobled by a decree of the king. Thus the formation of two separate chambers was rendered impossible by the folly of those very men whose existence depended upon it. Thus all was confusion and dismay with the nobles and the clergy, while unanimity and vigor pervaded every movement of the Assembly.[113]

In this state of affairs a large proportion of the clergy, composing nearly all the parish ministers, were in favor of uniting with the Assembly. The Duke of Orleans also, among the nobility, led a small minority of the nobles in advocacy of the same measure. But the court generally entreated the king immediately to dissolve the Assembly, by violence if needful. The popular excitement in Paris and in Versailles became intense. The only hope of the people was in the Assembly. Its dissolution left them hopeless and in despair. The king was vacillating, intensely anxious to crush the popular movement, now become so formidable, but still fearing to adopt those energetic measures by which alone it could be accomplished. He at length decided, in accordance with that system of folly with which the court seems to have been inspired, to resort to the very worst measure which could have been adopted. On Friday the 17th of June the majority of the clergy, consisting of a few prelates and about one hundred and forty curates, resolved to withdraw from the dignitaries of the Church and unite with the people, in the Assembly, the next day. The prospect of such an accession to the popular branch struck consternation into the ranks of the privileged classes. A delegation of bishops and nobles in the night hastened to the king at Marly, and persuaded him to interfere to prevent the junction.

Yielding to their importunities he consented to shut up the hall of Assembly the next day, and to guard the entrance with soldiers, so that there might be no meeting. As an excuse for this act of violence it was to be alleged that the hall was needed for workmen to put up decorations, in preparation for a royal sitting which was to be held on Monday. The king thus gained time to decide upon the measures which he would announce at the royal sitting.[114]

At six o'clock in the morning of Saturday, placards were posted through the streets of Versailles announcing this decree. At seven o'clock, M. Bailly, president of the Assembly, received a note from one of the officers of the king's household, informing him of the decision. The Assembly had adjourned the evening before to meet at eight o'clock in the morning. It was, of course, proper that such a communication should have been made, not to the president at his lodgings, but to the assembled body. It was a stormy morning; sheets of rain, driven by a fierce wind, flooded the streets. At the appointed hour the president, accompanied by several deputies, approached the hall. They found the door guarded by a detachment of the royal troops, and a large number of the representatives assembled before it. Admission was positively refused, and it was declared that any attempt to force an entrance would be repelled by the bayonet.[115]



THE DOORS OF THE ASSEMBLY CLOSED AND GUARDED.

The Assembly and the people were greatly alarmed: measures of violence were already commenced. Their immediate dissolution was menaced, and thus were to perish all hopes of reform. The rain still fell in torrents. There was no hall in Versailles to which they could resort. Some proposed immediately adjourning to Paris, where they could throw themselves upon the protection of the masses. This measure, however, was rejected as too revolutionary in its aspect. One suggested that there was in the city an old dilapidated tennis-court, and it was immediately resolved to assemble upon its pavements. The six hundred deputies, now roused to the highest pitch of excitement and followed by a vast concourse of sympathizing and applauding people, passed through the streets to the unfurnished tennis-court. Here, with not even a seat for the president, the Assembly was organized, and Bailly, in a firm voice, administered the following oath, which was instantly repeated in tones so full and strong, by every lip, as to reach the vast concourse which surrounded the building:

> "We solemnly swear never to separate, and to assemble wherever circumstances shall require, until the constitution of the kingdom is established, and founded on a solemn basis."

Every deputy then signed this declaration excepting one man; and this Assembly so nobly respected private liberty as to allow him to enter his protest upon the declaration.

It was now four o'clock in the afternoon, and the Assembly, having immortalized the place as the cradle of liberty, adjourned.

The next day was the Sabbath, and Monday had been appointed for the royal sitting. The excitement of the court at Marly now amounted almost to a tumult of consternation. Necker, the minister, was proposing measures of conciliation, and had drawn up a plan which would probably have been accepted by the people, for none then wished for the overthrow of the monarchy.[116] All the leaders in the Assembly were united in the desire to preserve the monarchical form of government. Surrounded as they were by thrones, England, not America, was their model. They wished for a constitutional monarchy where the voice of the people should be heard, and where all the citizens should live in the enjoyment of equal rights. Their wishes were wise and noble. Necker, closeted in council with the

king and his cabinet, had at last brought the king and the majority of the cabinet over to his views, when an officer of the household came in and whispered to the king. The king immediately arose, and, requesting the council to await his return, left the room.

"This can only be a message from the queen," said M. de Montmorin to Necker; "the princes of the blood have got her to interfere, and persuade the king to adjourn his decision."

It was so. After half an hour the king returned, declined giving his assent to the plan till after another meeting, and dismissed the council. The royal sitting was also postponed until Tuesday.

On Monday, the 22d, the king held another council at Versailles. His two brothers, Count of Provence (Louis XVIII.) and Count d'Artois (Charles X.), with four other dignitaries of the privileged class, met with the council and took an active part in their deliberations. The project of Necker was here discussed and almost indignantly rejected. And yet the most earnest Royalists admit that it was extremely favorable to the privileged class, and no Republican can read it without being surprised that so much could then have been yielded by the people to aristocratic assumption.[117] But still this plan, in which Necker had gone to the utmost extreme of concession to propitiate the court, was peremptorily rejected, and another, insulting in its tone, imperious in its exactments, and utterly despotic in its principles, was adopted, and the Assembly was to be sternly dissolved. Necker remonstrated in vain, and at last, in mortification and despair, declared that he could not countenance such a message by his presence, and that he should be under the necessity of resigning his ministry. The feeble, vacillating king was in judgment and in heart with Necker, as were also one or two other of the ministers; but the queen, inheriting the spirit of Austrian despotism, acting through the two brothers of the king and the majority of the court, carried her point. This agitated discussion continued until midnight of Sunday, and then it was too late to propose the defiant message for the next day. The royal sitting was consequently postponed until Tuesday.[118]

To prevent the Assembly from meeting in the tennis-court on Monday, where the curates could join them, the Count d'Artois sent word to the keeper that he wished for the tennis-court on that day to play. On Monday

morning, when the Assembly, according to its adjournment, met at the door, they found the entrance guarded, and they were excluded under the plea that the Count d'Artois wished for the room for his own amusement. Thus an Assembly, now consisting of seven or eight hundred of the most illustrious men of France, the representatives of twenty-five millions of people, were driven again into the streets, because a young nobleman wished for their room that he might play a game of ball.

Some of the younger deputies, exasperated by such treatment, were in favor of forcing an entrance. But armed bands, all under aristocratic officers, were parading the streets, bayonets glittered around the hall, and fifty thousand troops were within summons. The court did not disguise its merriment as it again contemplated the Assembly wandering houseless like vagabonds in the street. The nobles now felt exultant. They had compelled the king to adopt their plan. The Assembly was to be dismissed in disgrace, and an ample force of infantry, cavalry, and artillery was at hand to carry out their arrogant decree. They no longer feared the Assembly. They no longer hesitated openly to deride them.[119]

These representatives of the people, thus insulted beyond all endurance, were for a time in great perplexity. It so happened, however, that the curates who had voted to unite with the Third Estate, about one hundred and forty in number,[120] with the Archbishop of Vienne at their head, had met in the Church of St. Louis, intending to go from there in procession to join the Assembly. They immediately sent to the Commons an invitation to repair to the church where they were assembled, and, taking themselves the choir, left the nave for their guests. The clergy then descended and united with the Commons, where they were received with shouts, embracings, and tears. It was a solemn hour, and emotions too deep for utterance agitated all hearts. Fearful perils were now accumulating. Rumors had reached the ears of the deputies that the court intended the violent dissolution and dispersion of the Assembly. Thus would end all hopes of reform. The troops marching and countermarching, the new regiments entering the city, the hundred pieces of field artillery approaching, the cannon frowning before the door of their hall, the exultant looks and defiant bearing of their foes, all were portents of some decisive act.[121]

The morning of the 23d of June arrived. It was dark and stormy. At the appointed hour, ten o'clock, the members repaired to the hall of the Assembly to meet the king and court. In various ways they had received intimations of the measures which were to be adopted against them, and anxiety sat upon every countenance. As they approached the hall they found that the same disrespect which they had received on the 5th of May was to be repeated with aggravations. The court wished to humiliate the Commons; they did but exasperate them. The front entrance was reserved as before for the clergy and the nobles. The Commons were guided to a side door not yet opened, where they were left crowded together in the rain. They made several endeavors to gain admission, but could not, and at last sought refuge from the storm in an adjoining shed.[122]

In the mean time the two privileged classes approached with an unusual display of pompous carriages and gorgeous liveries. Files of soldiers protected them, bands of music greeted them, and with the most ostentatious parade of respect they were conducted to their seats. Then the side door was thrown open, and the Commons, with garments drenched and soiled, filed in to take the back benches left for them. They found the aristocracy in their seats, as judges awaiting the approach of criminals. The nobles and the high clergy could not repress their feelings of exultation. The Commons were now to be rebuked, condemned, and crushed.[123]

Military detachments patrolled the streets and were posted around the hall. Four thousand guards were under arms, and there were besides several regiments in the vicinity of Versailles, within an hour's call. A tumultuous mass of people from Paris and Versailles surged around the building and flooded all the adjoining avenues. As the carriage of the king and queen, surrounded by its military retinue, approached, no voice of greeting was heard. The multitude looked on silent and gloomy. The king was exceedingly dejected, for his judgment and heart alike condemned the measures he had been constrained to adopt. The queen was appalled by the ominous silence, and began to fear that they had indeed gone too far. When a few voices shouted "Vive le Duc d'Orleans!" she correctly interpreted this greeting of her implacable foes as an intended insult, and was observed to turn pale and almost to faint.

The king entered the hall with the queen, his two brothers, and his ministers, excepting Necker. The absence of Necker so exclusively arrested all thoughts, that the royal pageant was disregarded. Here again the monarch was received in silence, interrupted only by faint applause from the nobles.

The king hardly knew how to utter the arrogant, defiant words which had been put into his mouth. It was the lamb attempting to imitate the roar of the lion. He addressed a few words to the Assembly, and then placed his declaration in the hands of one of his secretaries to be read.[124]

It declared his intention to maintain the distinction of the three orders, and that they should vote separately; that they might occasionally meet together, with the consent of the king, to vote taxes. The decree of the Commons, constituting a National Assembly, was pronounced illegal and null. The deputies were forbid to receive any instructions from their constituents. No spectators were allowed to be present at the deliberations of the States-General, whether they met together or in different chambers. No innovation was to be allowed in the organization of the army. Nobles, and nobles only, were to be officers. The old feudal privileges were to remain unaltered. No ecclesiastical reforms were to be allowed, unless sanctioned by the clergy.[125]

Such were the prohibitions. Then came the benefits. The king promised to sanction equality of taxation, *whenever the clergy and the nobles should consent to such taxation*. The king promised to adopt any measures of finance and expenditure which the States-General should recommend, if he judged such measures *compatible with the kingly dignity*. He invited the States—which, be it remembered, were to be assembled in three chambers, the clergy and the nobility being thus able to outvote the Commons by two votes to one—to *propose* measures for abolishing *lettres de cachet*, measures which should not interfere with the power of repressing sedition, and of secretly punishing those whose relatives would be dishonored by their being brought to trial. They were also invited to seek the means of reconciling liberty of the press with the respect due to religion and to the honor of the citizens. In conclusion, the king threatened that if the Commons refused obedience to these declarations he would immediately

dissolve the States, and again take the reins of government entirely into his own hands. This address was closed with the following words:

> "I command you, gentlemen, immediately to disperse, and to repair to-morrow morning to the chambers appropriate to your order."[126]

The king then, with his attendant court, left the hall. A large part of the nobility and nearly all the bishops followed him. Exultation beamed upon their faces, for they supposed that the National Assembly was now effectually crushed.

FOOTNOTES:

111. Michelet, vol. i., p. 105.

112. "The party which professed to be the defender of the throne spoke with infinite disdain of the authority of the King of England. To reduce a King of France to the miserable condition of the British monarch was, in the bare conception, heinous and treasonable."—*Considerations on the French Revolution, by Madame de Staël.*

113. Madame de Staël, vol. i., p. 106.

114. Michelet, vol. i., p. 106.

The Marquis of Ferrières, a deputy of the nobles and an earnest advocate of aristocratic assumption, writes in his Mémoires: "The court, unable any longer to hide from themselves the real truth that all their petty expedients to separate the orders served only to bring on their union, resolved to dissolve the States-General. It was necessary to remove the king from Versailles, to get Necker and the ministers attached to him out of the way. A journey to Marly was arranged. The pretext was the death of the dauphin. The mind of the king was successfully worked upon. He was told it was high time to stop the unheard-of enterprises of the Third Estate; that he would soon have only the name of a king. The Cardinal Rochefoucault and the Archbishop of Paris threw themselves at the feet of the king and supplicated him to save the clergy and protect religion. The Parliament sent a secret deputation proposing a scheme for getting rid of the States-General. The keeper of the seals, the Count d'Artois, the queen, all united. All was therefore settled, and an order from the king announced a royal sitting and suspended the States under the pretense of making arrangements in the hall."

115. "The deputies stand grouped on the Paris road, on this umbrageous *Avenue de Versailles*, complaining aloud of the indignity done them. Courtiers, it is supposed, look from their windows and giggle."—*Carlyle*, vol. i., p. 156.

"Is it decent," writes M. Bailly in his Memoirs, "that the members of the National Assembly, or even the deputies of the Commons, as you may still please to consider them, should thus be

apprised of the intentions of the king, of the suspension of their own sittings, only by the public criers and by notices posted on the wall, as the inhabitants of a town would be made acquainted with the shutting up of a theatre?"

116. "It is quite certain that, mixed with a little personal vanity, the most sincere wish for the happiness of France, and the happiness of mankind, was the ruling motive with Necker."—*Lectures on the French Revolution, by Wm. Smyth*, vol. i., p. 287.

"Let us not forget that at that period the whole Assembly was Royalist, without excepting a single member."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 108.

117. For a full detail of this project see Œuvres de Necker, vol. vi., p. 119. Necker is condemned by Michelet with merciless severity for presenting a project which, though it secured a few reforms, still allowed the despotic court such sway. But if the minister could not carry even this project, what could he have done with one making still greater demands? The British government, with its king and its houses of lords and commons, was Necker's model; though he still allowed the court powers which would not be tolerated by the people of Great Britain for an hour. But the French court looked with *contempt* upon the limited powers of the king and the nobles of England, and would consent to no approximation to the government which prevailed there. The *Tiers Etat* would have been more than satisfied with the English Constitution. No one then desired the overthrow of the monarchy.

118. Smyth, Lectures on French Revolution, i., 192; Michelet, i., 110.

119. Michelet, i., 110.

120. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, p. 53, says that the clergy voted for union one hundred and forty-nine voices against one hundred and twenty-six.

121. "The nobility that I converse with," writes Arthur Young, "are most disgustingly tenacious of all old rights, however hard they may bear upon the people. They will not hear of giving way in the least to the spirit of liberty beyond the point of paying equal land-taxes, which they hold to be all that can with reason be demanded."

"It was only very late," writes Wm. Smyth, "and when too late, that they reached even this point."

122. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, i., 56.

123. Id., 57; Michelet, i., 112.

124. Hist. Parl., vol. ii., p. 15.

125. "The nobles having applauded the article consecrating feudal rights, loud, distinct voices were heard to utter, 'Silence there!'"—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 115.

126. Mr. Alison strangely says that "These decrees contained the whole elements of rational freedom, abolished pecuniary privileges, regulated the expenses of the royal household, secured the liberty of the press, regulated the criminal code, and the personal freedom of the subject."—*Alison, Hist. of Europe*, vol. i., p. 74. The French people did not think so. See Michelet's indignant rejection of the mockery of these decrees.—*Mich., Hist. Fr. Rev.*, vol. i., p. 115. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, member of the Assembly, writes, "In these benefits which the king was thus promising to the nation, no mention was made either of the constitution so much desired, or of the participation of the States-General in all acts of legislation, or of the responsibility of ministers, or of the liberty of the press; and almost every thing which

constitutes civil liberty was passed over in total silence. Nevertheless, the pretensions of the privileged orders were maintained, the despotism of the ruler was sanctioned, and the States-General were abased and subject to his power."—*Hist. of Rev. of Fr.*, vol. i., p. 56.

The Marquis of Ferrières writes, "The hall was surrounded by soldiers and by guards. Every thing about the throne was silent and melancholy. The declaration itself satisfied no one; and the king spoke rather like a despot who commanded than a monarch who discussed with the representatives of his people the interests of a great nation."

Chapter XI.
Revolutionary Measures

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> Speech of Mirabeau.—Approach of the Soldiers and Peril of the Assembly.—Elation of the Queen.—Triumph of Necker.—Embarrassment of the Bishops and the Nobles.—Letter of the King.—The Bishops and Nobles join the Assembly.—Desperate Resolve of the Nobles.—The Troops sympathizing with the People.

As the king, followed by the nobles and the clergy, left the hall, the Commons remained in their seats. The crisis had now arrived. There was no alternative but resistance or submission, rebellion or servitude. For a moment there was an entire silence. But the spirit of indomitable determination glowed on every cheek. Mirabeau was the first to rise. In a few of those impassioned sentences, which pealed over France like clarion notes, he exclaimed

> "Why this dictatorial language, this train of arms, this violation of the national sanctuary? Who is it who gives commands to us—to us to whom alone twenty-five millions of men are looking for happiness? Let us arm ourselves with our legislative authority, remember our oath—that oath which does not permit us to separate until we have established the constitution!"[127]

While he was yet speaking the Marquis of Brézé, one of the officers of the king, perceiving that the Assembly did not retire, advanced into the centre of the hall, and, in a loud authoritative voice, a voice at whose command nearly fifty thousand troops were ready to march, demanded,

> "Did you hear the commands of the king?"

"Yes, sir," responded Mirabeau, with a glaring eye and a thunder tone which made Brézé quail before him, "we did hear the king's command; and you, who have neither seat nor voice in this house, are not the person to remind us of his speech. Go, tell those who sent you that we are here by the power of the people, and that nothing shall drive us hence but the power of the bayonet."[128]

The officer, the marquis, turned to the president, as if inquiring his decision.

"The Assembly," said M. Bailly, "resolved yesterday to sit after the royal session. That question must be discussed."

"Am I to carry that answer to the king?" inquired the marquis.

"Yes, sir," replied the president. The marquis departed. Armed soldiers now entered the hall accompanied by workmen to take away the benches and dismantle the room. Soldiers surrounded the building and the life-guard advanced to the door. But a word from the president arrested the workmen, and they stood with their tools in their hands contemplating with admiration the calm majesty of the Assembly. The body-guard had now formed a line in front of the hall, and the position of its members was full of peril. It was expected that all the prominent deputies would be arrested. A vote was then passed declaring the person of each member of the Assembly inviolable, and pronouncing any one guilty of treason who should attempt to arrest any one of the representatives of the nation.

In the mean time the nobility were in exultation. They deemed the popular movement now effectually crushed. In a crowd they hastened to the residences of the two brothers of the king, the Count of Provence and Count d'Artois, with their congratulations. They then repaired to the queen and assured her that the work was done and that all was safe. The queen was much elated, and received them with smiles. Presenting to them her son, the young dauphin, she said, "*I intrust him to the nobility*."

But at this very moment loud shouts were heard in the streets, swelling in a roar of tumult from countless voices, which penetrated the inmost apartments of the Palace of Versailles. All were eager to ascertain the cause. The whole body of the people by a simultaneous movement had gathered around the apartments of M. Necker, and were enthusiastically applauding him for refusing to attend the royal sitting.

This manifestation of popular feeling was so decisive, that alarm took the place of joy. Even the fears of the queen were aroused, and Necker was promptly sent for. He entered the palace accompanied by a crowd of many thousands who filled the vast court-yard. Both king and queen entreated Necker to withdraw his resignation, the king good-naturedly saying, "For my part I am not at all tenacious about that declaration."

Necker willingly complied with their request.[129] As he left the palace he informed the multitude that he should remain at his post. The announcement was received with unbounded demonstrations of joy. As the exultant shouts of the populace resounded through the castle, Brézé entered to inform the king that the deputies still continued their sitting, and asked for orders. The king impatiently walked once or twice up and down the floor, and then replied hastily, "Very well! leave them alone."

The next day, Wednesday, June 24th, the Assembly met in its hall and transacted business as quietly as if there had been no interruption. The clergy, who had joined them in the Church of St. Louis, still resolutely continued with them, notwithstanding the prohibition, and this day one half of the remaining clergy joined the Assembly. A few individuals from the nobles had also gone over. These two bodies thus broken were now quite powerless, and were fast sinking into insignificance. Thousands continually thronged the galleries and the aisles of the National Assembly, while no one seemed to turn a thought to the two chambers where the few remaining clergy and the nobles were separately lingering.

The next day, June 26th, after a long and exciting debate, in which the overwhelming majority of the nobles resolved to remain firm in opposition to union, forty-seven of their number, led by the Duke of Orleans and La Fayette, and embracing many of the most eminent for talent and virtue, repaired to the Assembly, where they were received with hearty demonstrations of joy. One of the nobles, Clermont Tonnere, speaking in behalf of the rest, said,

> "We yield to our conscience, but it is with pain that we separate from our colleagues. We have come to concur in the public regeneration. Each of us will let you know the degree of activity which his mission allows him."[130]

The king now wrote a letter to his "faithful clergy" and his "loyal nobility," urging them to join the Assembly without further? delay. In compliance with this request, the next day, June 27th, the remaining portion of the nobility and of the clergy entered the hall and united with the Third Estate. The Marquis of Ferrières, who was one of the nobles who at this time united with the Assembly, records,

> "It was now a grievous mortification and affliction to the nobility to join the Third Estate. The Vicomte de Noailles assured the nobles that the union would be but temporary; that the troops were coming up, and that in fifteen days every thing would be changed. The king sent a second letter assuring the nobles that the safety of the state and his own personal security depended upon the union. The assembly of nobles rose in a tumultuous manner, they were joined by the minority of the clergy, and entered in silence the hall of the *Tiers Etat*."

But the nobles and the dignitaries of the Church had hardly entered the hall of the Assembly ere they regretted the step. The Assembly was proceeding energetically in the formation of a constitution which would sweep away abuses. "Many of the nobles," says Ferrières, with wonderful frankness, "would have quitted the Assembly, but a partial secession would have done nothing. They were assured that the troops were coming up, were praised for the resistance they had already made, and were urged that they must dissemble a little longer. And, indeed, thirty regiments were now marching upon Paris. The pretext was public tranquillity; the real object the dissolution of the Assembly." Many petty artifices were resorted to still to keep up the appearance of distinct orders. The very day of the junction they endeavored to eject M. Bailly, a citizen, from the presidency, and to place a clerical noble, the Cardinal de la Rochefoucault, in the chair. The movement was promptly checked.[131] They for some time entered in a body after the openings of the sittings, and stood together, declining to sit down with the deputies. But M. Bailly, by his prudence and firmness, upheld the rights of the Assembly, and maintained the dignity of his post. It was indeed a strange spectacle for France to see a plain citizen,

illustrious only in virtue and talent, presiding over the proudest nobles and the highest dignitaries of the Church.

The leading members of the Assembly were patriots seeking reform, not revolution. It was expected that this union would promote harmony.

"How honorable," said Mirabeau, "will it be for France that this great revolution has cost humanity neither offenses nor crimes." After describing the sanguinary scenes which accompanied the revolutions in England and America, he continued, "We, on the contrary, have the happiness to see a revolution of the same nature brought about by the mere union of enlightened minds with patriotic intentions. Our battles are only discussions. Our enemies are only prejudices that may indeed be pardoned. Our victories, our triumphs, so far from being cruel, will be blessed by the very conquered themselves.

"History too often records actions which are worthy only of the most ferocious animals; among whom, at long intervals, we can sometimes distinguish heroes. There is now reason to hope that we have begun the history of man, the history of brothers, who, born for mutual happiness, agree even when they vary, since their objects are the same and their means only are different."

This triumph of the Third Estate exasperated the privileged classes, and they were eager for revenge. It was evident that their exclusive power was imperiled, and they resolved, at whatever expense of bloodshed, to secure the dissolution of the Assembly. It soon became manifest to all that violence was meditated; that a secret conspiracy was ripening; that the nobles had united with the Assembly merely to subserve a momentary purpose, and that the Assembly was to be dispersed by force, the leaders punished, and that all who should interfere for their protection were to be shot down.[132]

"I could never ascertain," writes Necker, "to what lengths their projects really went. There were secrets upon secrets; and I believe that even the king himself was far from being acquainted with all of them. What was intended was probably to draw the monarch on, as circumstances admitted, to measures of which they durst not at first have spoken to him. With me, above all others, a reserve was maintained, and reasonably, for my indisposition to every thing of the kind was decided."

The nobles again became arrogant and defiant. Openly they declared their intentions to crush the Assembly, and boasted that with an army of fifty thousand men they would bring the people to terms.[133] Loaded cannon were already placed opposite the hall, and pointed to the doors of the Assembly. This state of menace and peril excited the Parisians to the highest pitch, and united all the citizens high and low to defend their rights. The French soldiers, who came from the humble homes of the people, sympathized in all these feelings of their fathers and brothers. The women, as they met the soldiers in the streets, would ask, "Will you fire upon your friends to perpetuate the power of your and our oppressors?" Ere long there came a very decisive response, "No! we will not." Thus the soldiers who had been collected to overawe the capital were soon seen in most friendly intercourse with the citizens, walking with them arm in arm, comprehending the issues which now agitated the nation, and evidently ready to give their energies to the defense of the popular cause.

FOOTNOTES:

127. The curate, M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, one of the most illustrious members of the Assembly, and who finally perished on the guillotine, writes, "These memorable expressions have been since engraved upon the bust of Mirabeau which was executed for the society of *Friends to the Constitution*. A print of this hath been struck off, in which we behold, not the downcast look of a cunning conspirator, but the ardent air and attitude of a noble-hearted man, who sincerely meant the welfare of his country; and such a man was *Mirabeau*."

128. Michelet, vol. i., p. 116. "In the middle of the night Bailly was called up and privately informed that Necker disapproved of the measures adopted, and that he would not attend the sitting, and would probably be dismissed. It had been settled between Bailly and the Assembly that no reply should be made to the king whatever he might say to them. It was afterward intimated to Bailly by the king, that he wished no reply to be made. And under these most unfortunate circumstances the royal sitting opened."—*Lectures on the French Revolution, by William Smyth*, vol. i., p. 269.

129. Michelet, vol. i., p. 118.

130. Thiers, *Fr. Rev.*, vol. i., p. 51.

131. Bailly's Mem., vol. i., p. 252, 257, 260.

132. For abundant proof of the conspiracy, see Memoirs of Marmontel, a man of letters and of elegant attainments, who resided in Paris at this time.

133. "Before the Revolution the number of noble families in France did not exceed 17,500. Reckoning five individuals to a family there might have been about 90,000 nobles. The

disasters of the Revolution must have reduced them to less than 40,000."--*L'Europe après le Congrès d'Aix la Chapelle, by Abbé de Pradt, note at the end of* chap. ix.

Chapter XII.
The Tumult in Paris

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Marshal Broglie.—Gatherings at the Palais Royal.—Disaffection of the Soldiers.—Imprisonment and Rescue.—Fraternization.—Petition to the Assembly.—Wishes of the Patriots.—Movement of the Troops.—Speech of Mirabeau.—New Menaces.—Declaration of Rights.—Dismissal of Necker.—Commotion in Paris.—Camille Desmoulins.—The French Guards join the People.—Terror in Paris.—Character of the King.

Notwithstanding the National Assembly was thus organized, rumors filled the air that the junction was but transient, and that the court was making preparation for some deed of violence. The citizens of Paris were in a great ferment, all business was at a stand, the poorer classes had no employment, and their families were actually perishing from hunger. Troops were continually parading the streets, and an army of fifty thousand men, now placed under the command of the veteran Marshal Broglie, encircled the city of Versailles. The spacious garden of the Palais Royal in Paris, surrounded by the most brilliant shops in Europe, was the general rendezvous of the populace anxiously watching the progress of events. The people in their misery had nothing to do but to meet together to hear the news from Versailles. Often ten thousand men were assembled in the garden, where impassioned orators harangued them upon their rights and upon their wrongs. The Duke of Orleans, with his boundless wealth, encouraged every insurrectionary movement. He was willing so far to renounce aristocratic privileges as to adopt a constitution like that of England, if he, as the head of the popular party, could be placed upon the throne, from which he hoped to eject his cousin Louis XVI

It soon became evident that there was a *Tiers Etat* in the army as well as in the state. The French Guards, consisting of three thousand six hundred picked men, in the highest state of discipline and equipment, were

stationed at Paris. They began to echo the murmurs of the populace. The declaration of the king had informed them that no reform whatever was to be tolerated in the army; that the common soldier was to be forever excluded from all promotion. The privates and subalterns were doomed to endure all the toil of the army and its most imminent perils, but were to share none of its honors or emoluments. The troops were governed by young nobles, generally the most dissolute and ignorant men, who merely exhibited themselves upon the field on parade days, and who never condescended even to show themselves in the barracks.

The discontent of the soldiers reached the ears of their officers. Apprehensive that by association with the people the troops might become allied to them by a common sympathy, the officers commanded the guards no longer to go into the streets, and consigned them to imprisonment in their barracks. This of course increased their exasperation, and, being left to themselves and with nothing to do, they held meetings very much like those which they had attended in the Palais Royal, and talked over their grievances and the state of the monarchy.[134] Patriotic enthusiasm rapidly gained strength among them, and they took an oath that they would not fire upon the people. The colonel of the regiment arrested eleven of the most prominent in this movement and sent them to the prison of the Abbaye, where they were to await a court-martial and such punishment as might be their doom. This was the 30th of June.[135] On the evening of that day, as a vast and agitated multitude was assembled at the Palais Royal, listening to the speakers who there, notwithstanding reiterated municipal prohibitions, gave intelligence of all that was passing at Versailles, tidings came of the arrest of the soldiers. A young man, M. Lourtalot, editor of a Parisian paper, mounted a chair and said,

> "These are the brave soldiers who have refused to shed the blood of their fellow-citizens. Let us go and deliver them. To the rescue!"

There was an instantaneous cry, rising from a thousand voices in the garden and reverberating through the streets, "To the Abbaye!" The throng poured out of the gate, and, seizing axes and crowbars as they rushed along, every moment increasing in numbers, soon arrived at the prison, six

thousand strong. There was no force there which could for a moment resist them. The doors were speedily battered down, the soldiers liberated and conducted in triumph to the Palais Royal. Here they were provided with food and lodging, and placed under the protection of a citizens' guard.

While on their way to the Palais Royal a squadron of cavalry was ordered to charge upon the people. They approached at full gallop, and then, regardless of their officers, reined in their horses, and, lifting their caps, with true French politeness saluted their citizen-friends. There was then a scene of *fraternization* such as the French metropolis alone can exhibit. Men and women ran out from the houses and the shops presenting to the dragoons goblets of wine, shouting "Vive le Roi! Vive la Nation!"[136]

The people were still disposed to love their king. They instinctively felt that his sympathies were with them. Thus far they desired only reform, not the overthrow of the monarchy. The court, however, were instructed by these scenes that they could not rely upon the French Guards to execute the bloody mandates they were about to issue. Hence vigorous efforts were immediately adopted to concentrate in the metropolis an efficient force of foreign mercenaries, Swiss and German troops, who would be less scrupulous in shooting down and trampling under iron hoofs the French people. The Parisians distinctly understood this movement, and one can hardly conceive of a measure more exasperating. It is worthy of record that the citizens, ascertaining that they had liberated one soldier who was accused of what they deemed a crime, immediately sent that one back to his prison cell.

The next day, July 1st, the populace at the Palais Royal, who were thus far under the guidance of the most virtuous, intelligent, and influential citizens, sent a committee to the National Assembly at Versailles urging them to interpose with the king for a pardon for the soldiers. This was a movement quite unexampled. The citizens, heretofore deprived of all political rights, had never before ventured to make their wishes known to their rulers. Even then it was considered by the privileged classes in the Assembly very impudent.[137] The Assembly very prudently sent back word to the Parisians, exhorting them to refrain from all acts of violence, and assuring them that the maintenance of good order was essential to the

prosperity of their cause.[138] At the same time the Assembly sent a deputation to the king imploring his clemency for the soldiers.

Troops were, however, still rapidly approaching the city from different parts of the kingdom. The nobles and the higher clergy were throwing every possible obstruction in the way of either deliberation or action by the Assembly, and it was manifest to all that a conspiracy was in progress for its violent dissolution.[139]

The courtiers could not conceal their exultation, and began openly to boast that their hour of triumph was at hand. Fifteen regiments of Swiss and German troops were now between Paris and Versailles. It was supposed that they, without reluctance, would fire upon French citizens. It was very evident that the court was studiously endeavoring to foment disturbances in Paris, that an appeal to the military might be necessary. On the other hand, the leaders of the revolution were doing every thing in their power to keep the people calm. A very able pamphlet was circulated through the city, containing the following sentiments:

> "Citizens! the ministers, the aristocrats, are endeavoring to excite sedition. Be peaceful, tranquil, submissive to good order. If you do not disturb the precious harmony now reigning in the National Assembly, a revolution the most salutary and the most important will be irrevocably consummated, without causing the nation blood or humanity tears."

One is bewildered in learning that these sentiments came from the pen of Jean Paul Marat![140]

The next day, the 2d of July, the king returned an answer to the deputation from the Assembly, that the soldiers should be pardoned as soon as order was re-established in the capital. Upon the receipt of the message at the Palais Royal, the guards were taken back to prison, from whence they were speedily released by a pardon from the king.

On the 3d of July, M. Bailly having resigned the presidency of the Assembly, the Archbishop of Vienne, one of the high clergy, who had warmly espoused the popular cause, was chosen president, and the Marquis de la Fayette, equally devoted to popular rights, was elected vice-

president. Thus the two most important offices of the Assembly were conferred upon men selected from the highest ranks of the privileged class. But this act of conciliation did not in the least degree conciliate men who were determined at every hazard to perpetuate despotism.

The aspect of affairs was every hour becoming more threatening. New regiments of foreigners were continually marching into the metropolis, and occupying all the avenues which conducted to Paris and Versailles. Squadrons of horse were galloping through the streets and heavy artillery rumbling over the pavements of both the cities. The Elysian Fields, the Place Louis XV., the Field of Mars, presented the aspect of an encampment. Sentinels were placed around the French Guards, who were confined in their barracks, to prevent them from holding any intercourse with the citizens or with the other soldiers.[141] Versailles was encompassed by armies, and a battery of artillery was pointed at the very doors of the Assembly.

On Friday, the 10th of July,[142] Mirabeau rose in the Assembly, and proposed that the discussion of the Constitution should be suspended while a petition was sent to the king urging the removal of these menacing armies.

"Fresh troops," said he, "are daily advancing; all communications are intercepted. All the bridges and promenades are converted into military posts. Movements, public and secret, hasty orders and counter-orders, meet all eyes. Soldiers are hastening hither from all quarters. Thirty-five thousand men are already cantoned in Paris and Versailles. Twenty thousand more are expected. They are followed by trains of artillery; spots are marked for batteries; every communication is secured, every pass is blocked up; our streets, our bridges, our public walks are converted into military stations. Events of public notoriety, concealed facts, secret orders, precipitate counter-orders—in a word, preparations for war strike every eye and fill every heart with indignation."

At the same time a pamphlet was circulated through Paris, stating that the king was to hold another royal sitting on the 13th; that he had determined to enforce his declarations of the 23d of June; that the National Assembly was to be dissolved by violence, its leaders arrested, and Necker to be driven from the kingdom.

The tidings excited great consternation in the city, and the crowd in the Palais Royal began to talk of arming in self-defense. In the evening of that day an artillery company, which had been posted at the Hôtel des Invalides, came to the Palais Royal to fraternize with the people there. The citizens gave them a supper in the Elysian Fields, where they were joined by many troops from other regiments, and the friendly festivities were continued late into the hours of the warm summer night.[143]

This speech of Mirabeau was received with applause, and a deputation of twenty-four members was sent with a petition to the king. The address was drawn up by Mirabeau, and is of world-wide celebrity.[144]

"It is not to be dissembled," says Bailly, "that Mirabeau was in the Assembly its principal force. Nothing could be more grand, more firm, more worthy of the occasion than this address to the king. The great quality of Mirabeau was boldness. It was this that fortified his talents, directed him in the management of them, and developed their force. Whatever might be his moral character, when he was once elevated by circumstances he assumed grandeur and purity, and was exalted by his genius to the full height of courage and virtue."

Though Necker earnestly advised the removal of the troops, the king, now in the hands of his worst counselors, returned to the Assembly almost an insulting answer. He affirmed that the troops were mustered for the maintenance of public order and for the protection of the Assembly; and that if the members of the Assembly were afraid of their protectors, they might adjourn to Noyon or to Soissons, cities some fifty or sixty miles north of Paris, where, removed from the protection of the capital, they would have been entirely at the mercy of their enemies.[145]

"We have not," Mirabeau indignantly retorted, "asked permission to run away from the troops, but have requested that the troops may be removed from the capital."

Upon the reception of this answer from the king, La Fayette presented the Assembly a declaration of rights based upon that Declaration of American Independence which is almost the gospel of popular liberty. It is probable that Thomas Jefferson, who was then in Paris, aided La Fayette in preparing this paper. It affirmed that nature has made all men free and

equal, that sovereignty resides in the *nation*, and that no one can claim authority which does not emanate from the people.

On the evening of this day, Saturday, July 11th, as Necker was dressing for dinner, he received a note announcing his dismissal. A confidential letter from the king at the same time informed him that the monarch was unable to prevent his removal, and urged the minister to leave the kingdom without delay, and not to communicate to any one the knowledge of his dismissal lest it should excite public disturbance.[146] Necker, true to the confidence thus reposed in him, quietly dined, and then taking his carriage, as if for an evening drive with his wife, took the direction to the Netherlands, the nearest frontier, and pressed on rapidly through the night.

The next day was the Sabbath, July 12th. Early in the morning an extraordinary degree of activity was observed among the troops. Infantry and artillery were marching and countermarching through the streets of Paris and Versailles. The next day, Monday, was secretly appointed for the great *coup d'état*, in which the National Assembly was to be dispersed, and the citizens of Paris, if they manifested any resistance, were to be mown down by grapeshot. Redoubts were thrown up upon the heights of Montmartre, where cannon could be placed which would command the metropolis. Enormous placards were posted, enjoining the people to remain at home and not to assemble in the streets. The numerous staff of Marshal Broglie were galloping in all directions, disgusting the people with their insolent and consequential airs.[147] A battery of cannon was placed at the Sevres bridge, cutting off all direct communication between Versailles and Paris. The Place of Louis XV. was filled with troops, presenting the aspect of an encampment. In the adjoining Elysian Fields the Swiss Guards, with four pieces of artillery, were drawn up in battle array.

The people wondered what all this meant. At an early hour the garden of the Palais Royal was filled with an anxious and inquiring crowd. About ten o'clock an unknown person announced that Necker was dismissed, and that a new ministry was organized, composed of members of most determined hostility to popular reform. These tidings explained the formidable military display, and excited universal alarm and indignation. A young man, Camille Desmoulins, sprung upon a table, his dress

disarranged, his hair disheveled, his face flushed, his eyes gleaming with indignation and tears, and, with a pistol in each hand to protect himself from the police, shouted,

> "To arms! to arms! This dismissal is but the precursor to another St. Bartholomew. This night the Swiss and German troops are to march to our massacre. We have but one resource; it is to defend ourselves."

The impassioned cry was immediately echoed by the multitude, "To arms! to arms!" A rallying sign was needed. Desmoulins plucked a green leaf from a tree and attached it to his hat. Instantly all the chestnut-trees which embellished the garden were stripped of their foliage, and the leaf became the pledge of union. The flash of a moment had brought the whole body of the populace into a recognized uniform and a rude organization.

An army of more than a hundred thousand souls was in an hour enlisted, inspired with deathless enthusiasm, and crying out for leaders and for weapons. The movement was now in progress which was to scatter like chaff the battalions of foreign mercenaries, and to prostrate in dust and ashes the court and the throne. But alas for man! the flame which cheers the fireside may lay palaces and temples and happy homes in ruins. A new power had arisen, and it proved to be as blind and ignorant as it was resistless. Had the populace been imbued with Christian principles and intelligence, blessings only would have resulted from their sway.

CAMILLE DESMOULINS IN THE PALAIS ROYAL.

In this wild hour of turmoil the multitude were bewildered, and knew not what to do. They had no arms, and no recognized leaders except the National Assembly at Versailles, from whom they were now cut off by detachments of troops.

Near by there was a museum of wax figures. Some men ran to the spot and brought out busts of Necker and of the Duke of Orleans, who was also, it was said, threatened with exile. Decorating these busts with crape they bore them aloft through the streets with funeral honors. As the procession, rapidly increasing to many thousands, approached the Place of Louis XV., a detachment of German troops were marched up to charge them. But these soldiers had but little spirit for their work, and they were speedily put to flight by a shower of stones. A company of dragoons then made a charge. The unarmed procession was broken and put to flight in all directions. The busts were hacked to pieces by the sabres of the soldiers, and one man, a French guardsman, who disdained to run, was cut down and killed.

The French Guards were all this time locked up in their barracks, and the Prince of Lambesc had stationed a squadron of German dragoons in front of their quarters to prevent them coming to the aid of the people. But nothing now could restrain them. They broke down and leaped over the

iron rails, and fiercely attacked the hated foreigners. The dragoons fled before them, and the Prince of Lambesc, who commanded, fell back upon the garden of the Tuileries, and, entering the gates, charged upon the people who were there. One old man was killed and the rest were put to flight.

The French Guards, however, immediately drew up in battle array, and placed themselves between the citizens and the royal troops. In the mean time a formidable array of Swiss and German troops had been collected in the Field of Mars. They received orders to march to the Place Louis XIV. and dislodge the French Guards. In obedience to the command they marched to the spot, and then reversing their arms, positively refused to fire upon their comrades.[148]

The populace, however, unconscious of the support which they were receiving from the soldiers, were in a state of phrensy. The women and children, who had been passing the pleasant day in the recreations of the Elysian Fields, and who had fled shrieking before the horses and the sabres of the dragoons, speedily carried the tidings of the assault to every part of the city. An indescribable scene of tumult ensued. The multitude were running to and fro in search of arms. Upon all the steeples every bell rang the alarm. A population of nearly a million of souls was agitated by the most intense emotions of indignation and terror.[149]

"It would be difficult," writes Bertrand de Moleville, "to paint the disorder, fermentation, and alarm that prevailed in the capital during this dreadful day. A city taken by storm and delivered up to the soldiers' fury could not present a more dreadful picture. Imagine detachments of cavalry and dragoons making their way through different parts of the town at full gallop to the posts assigned them; trains of artillery rolling over the pavements with a monstrous noise; bands of ill-armed ruffians and women, drunk with brandy, running through the streets like furies, breaking the shops open, and spreading terror every where by their howlings, mingled with frequent reports of guns or pistols fired in the air; all the barriers on fire; thousands of smugglers taking advantage of the tumult to hurry in their goods; the alarm-bells ringing in almost all the churches; a great part of the citizens shutting themselves up at home, loading their guns and burying their money, papers, and valuable effects in

cellars and gardens; and during the night the town paraded by numerous patrols of citizens of every class, and even of both sexes, for many women were seen with muskets or pikes upon their shoulders. Such is the exact picture of the state of Paris on the 12th of July."

To add to the alarm, a letter which had been intercepted from Marshal Broglie was printed and circulated through the city, in which the marshal wrote to the Prince of Condé that the greater part of the National Assembly were hungry wolves, ready to devour the nobility; that with fifty thousand troops he would quickly disperse them and the crowd of fools who applauded them.[150]

As the sun went down and darkness enshrouded the city, the tumult increased, and the night was passed in sleeplessness, terror, and bewilderment. All were apprehensive that the dawn would usher in a dreadful day. A report of the agitated state of the metropolis was carried to the Assembly at Versailles, exciting very great anxiety in the minds of the patriots deliberating there. The nobles rejoiced. They earnestly desired such violence on the part of the people as should compel the king to restore the ancient order of things by the energies of grapeshot and the bayonet.[151]

M. Bailly, a man of unblemished character, whose purity and whose patriotism never can be questioned, gives the following testimony to the integrity of Louis XVI.:

> "Despotism is what never entered into the head of the king. He never had any wish but the happiness of his people, and this was the only consideration that could be ever employed as a means of influencing him. If any acts of authority were to be resorted to, he was never to be persuaded but by showing him that some good was to be attained or some evil avoided. I am convinced that his authority was never considered by him, nor did he wish to maintain it but as the best means of supporting and securing the tranquillity and peace of the community. As we are now speaking of the causes that produced this regeneration of the country, let us state the first to be the character of Louis XVI. A king less of a good man and ministers more adroit, and we should have had no revolution."

FOOTNOTES:

134. "The French Guards, those generous citizens, rebels to their masters, in the language of despotism, but faithful to the nation, are the first to swear never to turn their arms against her."—*M. Rabaud de St. Etienne*, vol. i., p. 62.

Mr. Alison calls this the "*revolt and treason of the French Guards*." The same occurrence assumes very different aspects as seen from different stand-points.

135. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne.

136. Hist. Parlementaire, vol. ii., p. 32. Michelet, vol. i., p. 127.

137. Histoire des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros, p. 15.

138. Thiers, vol. i., p. 61.

139. "While on this subject I can not refrain from remarking on the impolitic conduct of the nobles and the bishops. As they aimed only to dissolve the Assembly, to throw discredit on its operations, when the president stated a question they left the hall, inviting the deputies of their party to follow them. With this senseless conduct they combined an insulting disdain, both of the Assembly and of the people who attended the sittings. Instead of listening, they laughed and talked aloud, thus confirming the people in the unfavorable opinion which it had conceived of them; and instead of striving to recover the confidence and the esteem of the people, they strove only to gain their hatred and contempt."—*Ferrières*, t. ii., p. 122.

140. Histoire des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros, p. 15.

141. France and its Revolutions, by George Long, Esq.

142. Some authorities say the 9th.

143. France and its Revolutions, by George Long, Esq., vol. i., p. 25.

144. It is said that this famous address to the king was composed by M. Dumont, the leading ideas having been communicated to him by Mirabeau. A few extracts will give one an idea of the spirit of the piece.

"In the emotions of your own heart, sire, we look for the true safety of the French. When troops advance from every quarter, when camps are forming around us, when the capital is besieged, we ask one another with astonishment, 'Hath the king distrusted the fidelity of his people? What mean these menacing preparations? Where are the enemies of the state and of the king that are to be subdued?'

"The danger, sire, is urgent, is universal, is beyond all the calculations of human prudence.

"The danger is for the provinces. Should they once be alarmed for our liberty we should no longer have it in our power to restrain their impetuosity.

"The danger is for the capital. With what sensations will the people, in their state of indigence, and tortured with the keenest anguish, see the relics of its subsistence disputed for by a throng of threatening soldiers?

"The danger is for the troops. They may forget that the ceremony of enlisting made them soldiers, and recollect that nature made them men.

"The danger, sire, is yet more terrible. And judge of its extent by the alarms which bring us before you. Mighty revolutions have arisen from causes far less striking.

"Sire, we conjure you, in the name of our country, in the name of your own happiness, and your own glory, to send back your soldiers to the posts from which your counselors have drawn them. Send back that artillery," etc.

145. The Marquis of Ferrières acknowledges the insincerity of the court in the king's answer. "The Assembly saw," he writes, "through the snare that was spread for them. They would have lost all their hold if they had once removed themselves from the security which the vicinity of Paris afforded. Inclosed between the two camps (of Flanders and Paris) they would have found themselves at the mercy of the court."—*See also Hist. Phil. de la Rev. de France, par Ant. Fantin Desodoards*, vol. i., p. 150.

146. Madame de Staël's Considerations, etc., ch. xii.

147. Alison, vol. i., p. 73.

148. Miguet, vol. i., p. 50. Thiers, vol. i., p. 62.

149. The following journal kept by the king during these stormy days singularly illustrates the weakness of his character. We give it as found in the interesting work, *Histoire des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros*.

"*July 1st, 1789, Wednesday.* Nothing; deputation from the States. *Thursday 2d.* Mounted horseback at the gate Du Main to hunt a stag at Port Royal; took one. *Friday 3d.* Nothing. *Saturday 4th.* Hunted a buck at Boutard; took one and shot twenty-nine game. *Sunday 5th.* Vespers and benediction. *Monday 6th.* Nothing. *Tuesday 7th.* Hunted a stag at Port Royal; took two. *Wednesday 8th.* Nothing. *Thursday 9th*. Nothing; deputation from the States. *Friday 10th.* Nothing; answer to the deputation from the States. *Saturday 11th.* Nothing; departure of M. Necker. *Sunday 12th.* Nothing; departure of M. Montmorin, St. Priest and Luzerne. *Sunday 12th.* Nothing; took medicine."

Such was the record of the predecessor of Napoleon upon the throne of France when the monarchy was tottering to its foundations.

150. France and its Revolutions, by Geo. Long, Esq., vol. i., 23.

151. "During this day of mourning and consternation the conspirators gave loose to a guilty joy. At Versailles, in that orangery where were lodged, or, to speak more properly, dispersed in ambuscade, the German troops of Nassau, princes, princesses, favorites, male and female, were entertaining themselves with the music of the martial instruments. They were loading the soldiers with caresses and presents; and the latter, amid their brutal orgies, were pleasing themselves with the thought of dispersing the National Assembly, and of subjugating the kingdom. Calamitous night! when the courtiers were dancing to that foreign music, and enjoying the idea of the massacre."—*M. Rabaud de St. Etienne*, vol. i., p. 66.

Chapter XIII.
Storming the Bastille

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It will be remembered that in the election of deputies to the States-General Paris had been divided into sixty sections, each of which chose two electors. These hundred and twenty electors, composed of the most wealthy and influential citizens of Paris, immediately met and passed the night deliberating respecting the anarchy into which the city was so suddenly plunged. There were two foes whom the city had now equally to dread—the court and the mob; the princes, bishops, and nobles of the realm, with the armies and the resources of the kingdom, on the one hand, and the starving multitude, infuriated by misery and brutalized by ages of misrule, on the other. These were the two foes against which the Revolution ever had to struggle. The mob triumphed in the Reign of Terror. *Napoleon* rescued the Revolution from their bloody hands. The princes, with the aid of all the despotisms of Europe, triumphed at Waterloo, and the Revolution was crushed *for a time*.

Early on Monday morning, July 12th, the electors sent a deputation to the National Assembly at Versailles soliciting the establishment of a citizens' guard for the preservation of order. They gave a true and of course a terrible description of the tumult prevailing in the city.[152]

The Assembly immediately sent a committee of twenty-four members to the king, entreating him to withdraw the foreign troops from the capital. But the queen and the court had now obtained such an ascendency over the

feeble-minded king that he was constrained to send a reply that he should make no change whatever in his measures, and that the Assembly could accomplish no useful purpose by interfering with matters in the metropolis.

This was the day on which it was supposed armed bands were to march to disperse the Assembly. It was publicly stated at Versailles that a parliament composed of the nobles was to be suddenly organized at Versailles, that all the deputies of the Third Estate were to be tried for treason, that those members of the clergy and of the nobility who had declared in their favor were to be consigned to perpetual imprisonment, and that those who had been particularly active in the cause of popular liberty were to be sent to the scaffold.[153]

In preparation for this event, the day before (Sunday, 12th), the new ministry, bitterly hostile to the popular cause, had taken their seats in the king's cabinet; Necker, a fugitive, was hastening into the Netherlands; fifty thousand troops under Marshal Broglie, the most determined advocate of aristocratic privilege, crowded the environs of Paris and Versailles; and the troops on the 12th had been ordered to those movements which were preliminary to the great event.[154]

Under such perilous circumstances the Assembly, with a heroism which was truly sublime, determined, if they must perish, to perish in the discharge of duty. No impartial man can read the record of these days without paying the tribute of admiration to those men who thus periled liberty and life in the cause of popular rights. "I have studied history extensively," says De Tocqueville, "and I venture to affirm that I know of no other revolution at whose outset so many men were imbued with a patriotism as sincere, as disinterested, as truly great."[155]

When the Assembly received the answer of the king refusing to withdraw the troops, the only response it could make was in the passing of resolutions. Unintimidated by menaces which might well appal the stoutest heart, they resolved,

1. That M. Necker carried with him the regrets of the nation.
2. That it was the duty of the king immediately to remove the foreign troops.

3. That the king's advisers, *of whatever rank*, were responsible for present disorders.
4. That to declare the nation bankrupt was infamous.[156]

These were bold resolves. The third, it was well understood, referred to the queen and to the two brothers of the king. The fourth branded with infamy the measure which the court had already adopted in virtually proclaiming bankruptcy and in making payments only in paper.[157] After passing these resolutions the members of the Assembly were in such peril that they deemed it best to keep together for mutual protection. They voted their session permanent, and for seventy-two hours, day and night, continued in their seats, one half deliberating while the other half slept upon their benches. La Fayette, who was one of the most resolute of this Spartan band, relieved the venerable president in the labors of the chair.[158]

During the whole of Monday, even the king knew not what was passing in Paris; and the Assembly, all communication being cut off between Versailles and the metropolis, were in a state of most painful suspense. Every moment they dreaded receiving the news that the city was attacked, and the clangor of martial bands and arms around them led them momentarily to expect the entrance of a military force for their arrest. During the night of the 13th but little business was done, and the wearied members remained talking in groups or dozing in their seats.

Tuesday morning, July 14th, dawned—ever-memorable day. The Assembly, in the most perplexing anxiety, resumed its labors of preparing a constitution. During the whole day no definite tidings could be received from the city, and yet the booming of cannon was heard proclaiming serious and sanguinary trouble. M. Dumont, who wrote under the *nom de plume* of Groenvelt,[159] thus describes the scene of which he was an eye-witness:

> "But it was in the evening (of July 14th) that the spectacle exhibited by the Assembly was truly sublime. I shall not attempt to describe the various emotions of joy, grief, and terror which at different moments agitated those who were merely spectators and strangers in the Assembly. But the expression is improper; we were none of us strangers. For

myself, I felt as a Frenchman, because I felt as a man. Nothing could be more distracting than our uncertainty concerning the state of Paris, from whence no person was suffered to stir. The Viscount de Noailles[160] after repeated interruptions had contrived at last to get away; but the intelligence which he brought served only to quicken our impatience and increase our alarms.

"He knew that a multitude of people in search of arms had forced their way into the Hospital for Military Invalids; that the Bastille was besieged; that there had been already much bloodshed; that the troops encamped in the Field of Mars were expected every moment to march to the relief of that fortress, which could not be effected without deluging all Paris in blood.

"At this dreadful news the Assembly was penetrated with horror. A number of the members started from their seats by a kind of involuntary impulse, as if determined to hasten to the defense of their fellow-citizens. Others were for immediately bursting into the king's presence to remonstrate with him on what had happened; to say to him 'Behold the fruits of your counsels; hear the cries of your victims; see the destruction which is about to overwhelm your capital; say, are you the king or the murderer of your people?'

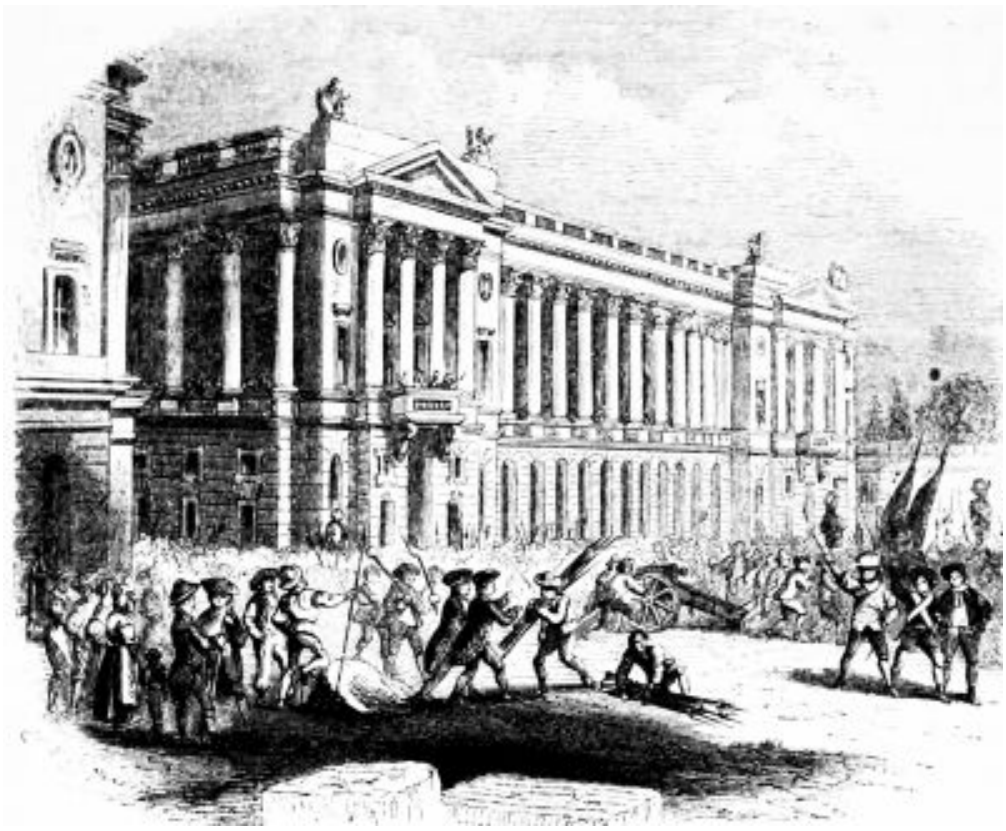
"But these tumultuous emotions gave place to the more temperate measure of sending a numerous deputation to the king, to represent to him the calamities which threatened Paris, and again to conjure him to remove the army. A long time elapsed, and the deputation did not return. No one could account for the delay. In the mean time there came a message that two deputies from the body of electors at Paris desired admittance. They were instantly ordered in. Not a breath was heard; every ear was attentive: every eye was strained; every mind was upon the rack. From some unaccountable mistake it

was some time before they entered. Never was impatience wrought up to a higher pitch. At last they appeared at the bar."[161]

But let us leave the Assembly listening at midnight of the 14th to the narrative of the deputies from Paris, while we enter the city to witness the transactions there. At three o'clock Monday morning tumultuous masses of men were filling the streets. The barriers, at which a tax had been levied upon all articles of food and other merchandise which entered the city, had been seized, set on fire, and were now blazing. It was expected every moment that the troops would enter to sweep the streets with grapeshot; and from every steeple the tocsin was pealing, summoning the people to arms. Thousands of those who thronged the city, houseless wanderers, were haggard and wan with famine, and knew not where to get a mouthful of bread.

There was a rumor that in the convents of the Lazarites a vast amount of wheat was hoarded up. Resistless, like an inundation, the hungry multitude poured in at the doors and filled the convent from attic to cellar. They found vast quantities of wine in the vaults and more than fifty cart-loads of wheat. They drank the wine freely, fed themselves, and sent the wheat to the market to be distributed. But they would allow no *stealing*. One wretch who was detected as a thief was immediately hung by the populace![162]

They then ransacked the city in pursuit of arms. Every sword, musket, and pistol from private residences was brought forward. The shops of the gunsmiths furnished a small supply. The royal arsenal, containing mainly curiosities and suits of ancient armor, was ransacked, and, while all the costly objects of interest were left untouched, every available weapon was taken away. The prison of La Force was filled with debtors. The populace broke down the doors and liberated these unfortunate men, incarcerated for no crime. The prison of the Chatelet was filled with convicts. These felons, hearing of the tumult and of the release of the prisoners of La Force, rose upon their keepers and endeavored to batter down their doors. The same populace, called upon by the keepers of the Chatelet, entered the court-yard of the prison, and, with pike and bayonet, drove the convicts back again to their cells.



SACKING THE ROYAL ARSENAL.

Crowds were assembled around the Hôtel de Ville, where the electors had met, demanding arms and the immediate establishment of a citizen's guard. But the electors moved with great caution. They did not feel authorized to establish the guard without the approval of the Assembly; and the Assembly had not ventured to adopt the measure without the consent of the king.

The excitement at last became so intense, and the importunity so pressing, that the electors referred the people to the mayor of the city. Flesselles, the mayor, was an officer of the crown, but he immediately obeyed the summons of the people, and came to the Hôtel de Ville. Here he feigned to be entirely on their side, declared that he was their father, and that he would preside over their meetings only by the election of the people. This announcement was received with a burst of enthusiasm. It was immediately decided that a citizen's guard should be established.

Paris then contained nearly a million of inhabitants, and almost every able-bodied man was eager to mount guard for the protection of the city.

There was no want of men, but as yet there was no efficient organization, and there were no arms. The electors were very anxious to avoid insurrection, and at first wished only for a guard simply strong enough to protect the city. They therefore decreed that each of the sixty districts should elect and arm two hundred of its most respectable citizens. These twelve thousand men would constitute a very admirable police, but a very poor army. Matters, however, were so rapidly approaching a crisis, and the peril so fast increasing, that on the afternoon of the same day it was decided that this citizen's guard should consist of forty-eight thousand men, and that the colors of the cockade should be blue and red. La Fayette proposed that they should add white, the old color of France, saying, "I thus give you a cockade which will go round the world."

The electors then appointed a committee to watch day and night over the safety of the city. Thus a new and independent government, with its strong army of defense, entirely detached from the throne, was established in a day. It was the sudden growth of uncontrollable events, which no human wisdom had planned. "But to whom," said the mayor, Flesselles, "shall the oath of fidelity be taken?" "To the Assembly of the citizens," an elector promptly replied.

Every thinking man saw clearly that matters were approaching a fearful crisis. Marshal Broglie, proud and self-confident, was at Versailles in constant conference with the court, and having at his command fifty thousand men, abundantly armed and equipped, all of whom could in a few hours be concentrated in the streets of Paris. Bensenval had assembled his force of several thousand Swiss and German troops, cavalry and artillery, in the Field of Mars. The enormous fortress of the Bastille, with its walls forty feet thick at its base and ten at the top, rising with its gloomy towers one hundred and twenty feet in the air, with cannon, charged with grapeshot, already run out at every embrasure to sweep the streets, commanded the city. It was garrisoned by about eighty French soldiers; but, as it was feared that they could not be wholly relied upon, forty Swiss troops were thrown in as a re-enforcement who would be as blindly obedient as the muskets they shouldered. Every moment rumors were reaching the city that Marshal Broglie was approaching with all his troops. Still no arms or ammunition could be obtained.

In this state of things a report was brought that a large quantity of powder had been embarked in a boat from the Hôtel des Invalides, and was floating down the Seine to be conveyed to Versailles. The people immediately ran to the Electors, and obtained an order to have the powder seized and brought to the hotel. It was promptly done. A heroic clergyman, the Abbé Lefebvre, who had great influence over the populace, assumed the perilous task of guarding the powder in one of the lower rooms of the Hôtel de Ville and distributing it among the people. For forty-eight hours this brave man guarded his dangerous treasure in the midst of fire-arms and the surging of the multitude. A drunken man at one time staggered in smoking amid the casks.[163]

Guns only were wanting now. It was well known that there were large stores of them somewhere in the city, but no one knew where to find them.

The mayor, Flesselles, who the people now began to suspect was deluding them merely to gain time for the royal troops to enter the city, being urged to point out the dépôt, said that the manufactory at Charleville had promised to send him thirty thousand guns, and that twelve thousand he was momentarily expecting. Soon a large number of boxes were brought, marked "guns." The mayor ordered them to be stored in the magazine till he should have time to distribute them. But the impatient people so urged the electors that they broke open the boxes and found them filled with rubbish. Was the mayor deceiving them? many anxiously inquired. Flesselles, much embarrassed, sent the people to two monasteries where he said guns were concealed; but the friars promptly threw open the doors, and no arms were to be found.

It soon became evident that Flesselles was trifling with the people, hoping to keep them unarmed until the troops should arrive to crush them mercilessly. He was well known as a dissolute man, hostile to popular liberty, and was undoubtedly a traitor, and a spy at the Hôtel de Ville, acting in communication with the court.[164]

The electors now ordered thirty thousand pikes to be manufactured. Every smith was immediately employed, every forge was glowing, and for thirty-six hours, day and night, without intermission, the anvils rang till the pikes were finished. All this day of Monday the people thought only of

defending themselves, but night again came, another night of terror, tumult, and sleeplessness.

The Bastille was the great terror of Paris. While that remained in the hands of their enemies, with its impregnable walls and heavy guns commanding the city, there was no safety. As by an instinct, during the night of the 13th, the Parisians decided that the Bastille must be taken. With that fortress in their hands they could defend themselves and repel their foes. But how could the Bastille be taken? It was apparently as unassailable as Gibraltar's rock. Nothing could be more preposterous than the thought of storming the Bastille. "The idea," says Michelet, "was by no means reasonable. It was an act of faith."

The Bastille stood in the very heart of the Faubourg St. Antoine, enormous, massive, and blackened with age, the gloomy emblem of royal prerogative, exciting by its mysterious power and menace the terror and the execration of every one who passed beneath the shadow of its towers. Even the sports of childhood dare not approach the empoisoned atmosphere with which it seemed to be enveloped.

M. de Launey was governor of the fortress, He was no soldier, but a mean, mercenary man, despised by the Parisians. He contrived to draw from the establishment, by every species of cruelty and extortion, an income of twenty-five thousand dollars a year. He reduced the amount of fire-wood to which the shivering inmates were entitled; made a great profit on the wretched wine which he furnished to those who were able to buy, and even let out the little garden within the inclosure, thus depriving those prisoners who were not in dungeon confinement of the privilege of a walk there, which they had a right to claim. De Launey was not merely detested as Governor of the Bastille, but he was personally execrated as a greedy, sordid, merciless man. Linguet's Memoirs of the Bastille had rendered De Launey's name infamous throughout Europe. Such men are usually cowards. De Launey was both spiritless and imbecile. Had he not been both, the Bastille could not have been taken.[165]

Still the people had no guns. It was ascertained that there was a large supply at the Hôtel des Invalides, but how could they be taken without any weapons of attack? Sombrueil, the governor, was a firm and fearless man, and, in addition to his ordinary force, amply sufficient for defense, he had

recently obtained a strong detachment of artillery and several additional cannon, showing that he was ready to do battle. Within fifteen minutes march of the Invalides, Bensenval was encamped with several thousand Swiss and German troops in the highest state of discipline, and provided with all the most formidable implements of war. Every moment rumors passed through the streets that the troops from Versailles were on the march, headed by officers who were breathing threatenings and slaughter.

With electric speed the rumor passed through the streets that there was a large quantity of arms stored in the magazine of the Hôtel of the Invalides. Before nine o'clock in the morning of the 14th, thirty thousand men were before the Invalides; some with pikes, pistols, or muskets, but most of them unarmed. The curate of St. Etienne led his parishioners in this conflict for freedom. As this intrepid man marched at the head of his flock he said to them, "My children, let us not forget that all men are brothers." The bells of alarm ringing from the steeples seemed to invest the movement with a religious character. Those sublime voices, accustomed to summon the multitude to prayer, now with their loudest utterance called them to the defense of their civil and religious rights.[166]

Sombrueil perceived at once that the populace could only be repelled by enormous massacre, and that probably even that, in the phrensied state of the public mind, would be ineffectual. He dared not assume the responsibility of firing without an order from the king, and he could get no answer to the messages he sent to Versailles. Though his cannon charged with grapeshot could have swept down thousands, he did not venture to give the fatal command to fire. The citizens, with a simultaneous rush in all directions, leaped the trenches, clambered over the low wall—for the hotel was not a fortress—and, like a resistless inundation, filled the vast building. They found in the armory thirty thousand muskets. Seizing these and six pieces of cannon they rushed, as by a common instinct, toward the Bastille to assail with these feeble means one of the strongest fortresses in the world—a fortress which an army under the great Condé had in vain besieged for three and twenty days![167]

De Launey, from the summit of his towers, had for many hours heard the roar of the insurgent city. As he now saw the black mass of countless thousands approaching, he turned pale and trembled. All the cannon,

loaded with grapeshot, were thrust out of the port-holes, and several cart-loads of paving-stones, cannon-balls, and old iron had been conveyed to the tops of the towers to be thrown down to crush the assailants. Twelve large rampart guns, charged heavily with grape, guarded the only entrance. These were manned by thirty-two Swiss soldiers who would have no scruples in firing upon Frenchmen. The eighty-two French soldiers who composed the remainder of the garrison were placed upon the towers, and at distant posts, where they could act efficiently without being brought so immediately into conflict with the attacking party.

A man of very fearless and determined character, M. Thuriot, was sent by the electors at the Hôtel de Ville to summon the Bastille to surrender. The draw-bridge was lowered, and he was admitted. The governor received him at the head of his staff.

"I summon you," said Thuriot, "in the name of the people, in the name of honor, and of our native land."

The governor, who was every moment expecting the arrival of troops to disperse the crowd, refused to surrender the fortress, but replied that he was ready to give his oath that he would not fire upon the people, if they did not fire upon him. After a long and exciting interview, Thuriot came forth to those at the Hôtel de Ville who had sent him.

He had hardly emerged from the massive portals, and crossed the draw-bridge of the moat, which was immediately raised behind him, ere the people commenced the attack. A scene of confusion and uproar ensued which can not be described. A hundred thousand men, filling all the streets and alleys which opened upon the Bastille, crowding all the windows and house-tops of the adjacent buildings, kept up an incessant firing, harmlessly flattening their bullets against walls of stone forty feet thick and one hundred feet high.[168]

The French soldiers within the garrison were reluctant to fire upon their relatives and friends. But the Swiss, obedient to authority, opened a deadly fire of bullets and grapeshot upon the crowd. While the battle was raging an intercepted letter was brought to the Hôtel de Ville, in which Bensenval, commandant of the troops in the Field of Mars, exhorted De Launey to remain firm, assuring him that he would soon come with

succor.[169] But, fortunately for the people, even these foreign troops refused to march for the protection of the Bastille.

The French Guards now broke from their barracks, and, led by their subaltern officers, came with two pieces of artillery in formidable array to join the people. They were received with thunders of applause which drowned even the roar of the battle. Energetically they opened their batteries upon the fortress, but their balls rebounded harmless from the impregnable rock.

Apparently the whole of Paris, with one united will, was combined against the great bulwark of tyranny.[170] Men, women, and boys were mingled in the fight. Priests, nobles, wealthy citizens, and the ragged and emaciate victims of famine were pressing in the phrensied assault side by side.[171] The French soldiers were now anxious to surrender, but the Swiss, sheltered from all chance of harm, shot down with deliberate and unerring aim whomsoever they would. Four hours of the battle had now passed, and though but one man had been hurt within the fortress, a hundred and seventy-one of the citizens had been either killed or wounded. The French soldiers now raised a flag of truce upon the towers, while the Swiss continued firing below. This movement plunged De Launey into despair. One hundred thousand men were beleaguering his fortress. The king sent no troops to his aid; and three fourths of his garrison had abandoned him and were already opening communications with his assailants. He knew that the people could never pardon him for the blood of their fathers and brothers with which he had crimsoned their streets—that death was his inevitable doom. In a state almost of delirium he seized a match from a cannon and rushed toward the magazine, determined to blow up the citadel. There were a hundred and thirty-five barrels of gunpowder in the vaults. The explosion would have thrown the Bastille into the air, buried one hundred thousand people beneath its ruins, and have demolished one third of Paris.[172] Two subaltern officers crossed their bayonets before him and prevented the accomplishment of this horrible design.

Some wretches seized upon a young lady whom they believed to be the governor's daughter, and wished, by the threat of burning her within view of her father upon the towers, to compel him to surrender. But the citizens promptly rescued her from their hands and conveyed her to a place of

safety. It was now five o'clock, and the assault had commenced at twelve o'clock at noon. The French soldiers within made white flags of napkins, attached them to bayonets, and waved them from the walls. Gradually the flags of truce were seen through the smoke; the firing ceased, and the cry resounded through the crowd and was echoed along the streets of Paris, "The Bastille surrenders." This fortress, which Louis XIV. and Turenne had pronounced impregnable, surrendered not to the arms of its assailants, for they had produced no impression upon it. It was conquered by that public opinion which pervaded Paris and which vanquished its garrison.[173]

The massive portals were thrown open, and the vast multitude, a living deluge, plunging headlong, rushed in. They clambered the towers, penetrated the cells, and descended into the dungeons and oubliettes. Appalled they gazed upon the instruments of torture with which former victims of oppression had been torn and broken. Excited as they were by the strife, and exasperated by the shedding of blood, but one man in the fortress, a Swiss soldier, fell a victim to their rage.

The victorious people now set out in a tumultuous procession to convey their prisoners, the governor and the soldiers, to the Hôtel de Ville. Those of the populace whose relatives had perished in the strife were roused to fury, and called loudly for the blood of De Launey. Two very powerful men placed themselves on each side of him for his protection. But the clamor increased, the pressure became more resistless, and just as they were entering the Place de Grève the protectors of the governor were overpowered—he was struck down, his head severed by a sabre stroke, and raised a bloody and ghastly trophy into the air upon a pike.

In the midst of the great commotion two of the Swiss soldiers of the Bastille, whom the populace supposed to have been active in the cannonade, were seized, notwithstanding the most strenuous efforts to save them, and hung to a lamp-post. A rumor passed through the crowd that a letter had been found from the mayor, Flesselles, who was already strongly suspected of treachery, directed to De Launey, in which he said,

> "I am amusing the Parisians with cockades and promises. Hold out till the evening and you shall be relieved."[174]

Loud murmurs rose from the crowd which filled and surrounded the hall. Some one proposed that Flesselles should be taken to the Palais Royal to be tried by the people. The clamor was increasing and his peril imminent. Pallid with fear he descended from the platform, and, accompanied by a vast throng, set out for the Palais Royal. At the turning of the first street an unknown man approached, and with a pistol shot him dead. Infuriate wretches immediately cut off his head, and it was borne upon a pike in savage triumph through the streets.

The French Guards, with the great body of the people, did what they could to repress these bloody acts. The French and Swiss soldiers took the oath of fidelity to the nation, and under the protection of the French Guard were marched to places of safety where they were supplied with lodgings and food. Thus terminated this eventful day. The fall of the Bastille broke the right arm of the monarchy, paralyzed its nerves of action, and struck it a death blow. The monarch of France, from his palace at Versailles, heard the distant thunders of the cannonade, and yet inscribed upon his puerile journal "*Nothing!*"[175]

FOOTNOTES:

152. "Thus Paris, without courts of justice, without police, without a guard, at the mercy of one hundred thousand men who were wandering idly in the middle of the night, and for the most part wanting bread, believed itself on the point of being besieged from without and pillaged from within; believed that twenty-five thousand soldiers were posted around to blockade it and cut off all supplies of provisions, and that it would be a prey to a starving populace."—*Memoirs of Marmontel.*

153. Hist. Phil. de la Rev. Fr., par Ant. Fantin Desodoards, t. i., p. 148.

154. Professor William Smyth, in his very able and candid lectures, delivered at the University of Cambridge, England, though his sympathies are with the court in this conflict, writes:

"On the whole, it appears to me that there can be no doubt that a great design had been formed by the court for the dissolution of the National Assembly and the assertion of the power of the crown. That military force was to have been produced, and according to the measure of its success would, in all probability, have been the depression of the spirit of liberty, even of national liberty, then existing in France. Less than this can not well be supposed; much more may be believed."—*Lectures on the French Revolution*, vol. i., p. 251.

155. The Old Régime and the Revolution, by M. de Tocqueville, p. 190.

156. Michelet, vol. i., p. 136.

157. "They were going to make payments with a paper money, without any other guarantee than the signature of an insolvent king."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 137.

158. "A list of the proscribed had been drawn up in the committee of the queen. Sixty-nine deputies, at the head of whom were placed Mirabeau, Sièyes, and Bailly, were to be imprisoned in the citadel of Metz, and from thence led to the scaffold, as guilty of rebellion. The signal agreed upon for this St. Bartholomew of the representatives of the people was the change of the ministry."—*Histoire des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros*, p. 15.

159. Lectures on the French Revolution, by Wm. Smyth, vol. i., p. 241.

160. Louis, Viscount of Noailles, was a deputy of the nobles. With La Fayette, Rochefoucault, and others he warmly espoused the cause of popular liberty. He voted in favor of uniting with the National Assembly, and was the first to exhort the clergy and the nobility to renounce their privileges, as injurious to the common weal. When the Revolution sank degraded into the hands of low and worthless men, he retired from the public service; but when Napoleon came to the rescue, he again entered the army, and was subsequently killed in a battle with the English.—*Enc. Am., Art. Noailles.*

161. "The better part of the Assembly," writes Ferrières, "strangers to all the intrigues which might be going forward, was filled with alarm at the sad reports that were circulating, and terrified at the designs of the court, which they were assured went to the seizing of Paris, the dissolution of the Assembly, and the massacre of the citizens. In the mean time the partisans of the court concealed their joy under an appearance of indifference. They came to the sittings to see what turns the deliberations would take, to enjoy their triumph, and the humiliation of the Assembly. The Assembly they looked upon as annihilated."

162. Michelet, vol. i., p. 38; Geo. Long, Esq., vol. i., p. 28.

163. "This heroic man was the Abbé Lefebvre d'Ormesson. No man rendered a greater service to the Revolution and the city of Paris."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 140.

"A patriot, in liquor, insisted on sitting to smoke on the edge of one of the powder-barrels. There smoked he, independent of the world, till the Abbé purchased his pipe for three francs, and pitched it far."—*Carlyle*, vol. i., p. 191.

164. Louis Blanc, Histoire de la Revolution Française, vol. ii., p. 365.

165. Michelet, vol. i., p. 156.

166. Histoire des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros, p. 16.

167. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, vol. i., p. 66.

168. "Its walls, ten feet thick at the top of its towers, and thirty or forty at the base, might long laugh at cannon-balls. Its batteries, firing down upon Paris, could in the mean time demolish the whole of the Marais and the Faubourg St. Antoine. Its towers pierced with windows and loop-holes, protected by double and triple gratings, enabled the garrison in full security to make a dreadful carnage of its assailants."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 143.

169. Thiers, vol. i., p. 69.

170. "Old men," says Michelet, "who have had the happiness and the misery to see all that has happened in this unprecedented half century, declared that the grand and national achievements of the Republic and the Empire had, nevertheless, a partial non-unanimous

character. But that the 14th of July alone was the day of the whole people."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 144.

171. Histoire Des Montagnards par Alphonse Esquiros, p. 17.

172. Michelet, vol. i., p. 156.

173. "Properly speaking the Bastille was not taken, it surrendered. Troubled by a bad conscience, it went mad, and lost all presence of mind."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 156.

Chapter XIV.
The King Recognizes the National Assembly

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Rout of the Cavalry of Lambesc.—Tidings of the Capture of the Bastille reach Versailles.—Consternation of the Court.—Midnight Interview between the Duke of Liancourt and the King.—New Delegation from the Assembly.—The King visits the Assembly.—The King escorted back to his Palace.—Fickleness of the Monarch.—Deputation sent to the Hôtel de Ville.—Address of La Fayette.—La Fayette appointed Commander of the National Guard.

While these scenes were transpiring in Paris, the court, but poorly informed respecting the real attitude of affairs, were preparing, on that very evening, with all the concentrated troops of the monarchy, to drown the insurrection in Paris in blood, to disperse the Assembly, consigning to the dungeon and the scaffold its prominent members, and to rivet anew those shackles of despotism which for ages had bound the people of France hand and foot

M. Berthier, one of the high officers of the crown, aided by his father-in-law, M. Foulon, under minister of war, was intensely active marshaling the troops, and giving orders for the attack. Conscious of the opposition they must encounter, and regardless of the carnage which would ensue, they had planned a simultaneous assault upon the city at seven different points. Entertaining no apprehension that the Bastille could be taken, or that the populace, however desperate, could present any effectual resistance to the disciplined troops of the crown, they were elated with the hope that the decisive hour for the victory of the court had arrived.

The queen could not conceal her exultation. With the Duchess of Polignac, one of the most haughty of the aristocratic party, and with others of the court, she went to the Orangery, where a regiment of foreign troops were stationed, excited the enthusiasm of the soldiers by her presence, and caused wine and gold to be freely distributed among them. In the

intoxication of the moment the soldiers sang, danced, shouted, clashed their weapons, and swore eternal fidelity to the queen.[176]

But these bright hopes were soon blighted. A cloud of dust was seen, moving with the sweep of the whirlwind through the Avenue of Paris. It was the cavalry of Lambesc flying before the people. Soon after a messenger rushed breathless into the presence of the court, and announced that the Bastille was taken, and that the troops in Paris refused to fire upon the people. While he was yet speaking another came with the tidings that De Launey and Flesselles were both slain. The queen was deeply affected and wept bitterly. "The idea," writes Madame Campan, "that the king had lost such devoted subjects wounded her to the heart." The court party was now plunged into consternation. The truth flashed upon them that while the people were exasperated to the highest pitch, the troops could no longer be depended upon for the defense of the court.

The masses, enraged by the insults and aggressions of the privileged classes, still appreciated the kindly nature of the king, and spoke of him with respect and even affection. Efforts were made by the court to conceal from Louis the desperate state of affairs, and at his usual hour of eleven o'clock he retired to his bed, by no means conscious that the sceptre of power had passed from his hands.

The Duke of Liancourt, whose office as grand master of the wardrobe, allowed him to enter the chamber of the king at any hour, was a sincere friend of Louis. He could not see him rush thus blindly to destruction, and, accordingly, entering his chamber and sitting down by his bedside, he gave him a truthful narrative of events in Paris. The king, astonished and alarmed, exclaimed, "Why, it is a revolt!" "Nay, sire," replied Liancourt, "it is a revolution!"

The king immediately resolved that he would the next morning, without any ceremony, visit the National Assembly, and attempt a reconciliation. The leading members of the court, now fully conscious of their peril, were assembled in the saloons of the Duchess of Polignac, some already suggested flight from the realm to implore the aid of foreign kings. The Assembly was still, during these midnight hours, deliberating in great anxiety. Many of the members, utterly exhausted by their uninterrupted service by day and by night, were slumbering upon the

benches. It was known by all that this was the night assigned for the great assault; and a rumor was passing upon all lips that the hall of the Assembly had been undermined that all the deputies might be blown into the air.

Paris at this hour presented a scene of awful tumult. It was momentarily expected that the royal troops would arrive with cavalry and artillery, and that from the heights of Montmartre bomb-shells would be rained down upon the devoted city. Men, women, and children were preparing for defense. The Bastille was guarded and garrisoned. The pavements were torn up, barricades erected, and ditches dug. The windows were illuminated to throw the light of day into the streets. Paving stones and heavy articles of furniture were conveyed to the roofs of the houses to be thrown down upon the assailing columns. Every smith was employed forging pikes, and thousands of hands were busy casting bullets. Tumultuous throngs of characterless and desperate men swept through the streets, rioting in the general anarchy. The watch-words established by the citizen patrols were "Washington and Liberty." Thus passed the night of the 14th of July in the Chateau of Versailles, in the hall of the Assembly, and in the streets of Paris.

At two o'clock in the morning of the 15th the Assembly ceased its deliberations for a few hours, and the members, though the session was still continued, sought such repose as they could obtain in their seats. At eight o'clock the discussions were resumed. It was resolved to send a deputation of twenty-four members, again to implore the king to respect the rights of the people, and no longer to suffer them to be goaded to madness by insults and oppression. As the deputation was about to leave, Mirabeau rose and said, "Tell the king that the foreign hordes surrounding us received yesterday the caresses, encouragement, and bribes of the court; that all night long these foreign satellites, gorged with money and wine, in their impious songs have predicted the enslavement of France, and have invoked the destruction of the National Assembly; tell him that in his very palace the courtiers have mingled dancing with these impious songs, and that such was the prelude to the massacre of St. Bartholomew."

He had hardly uttered these words ere the Duke of Liancourt entered and announced that the king was coming in person to visit the Assembly. The doors were thrown open, and, to the astonishment of the Assembly, the

king, without guard or escort and accompanied only by his two brothers, entered. A shout of applause greeted him. In a short and touching speech the king won to himself the hearts of all. He assured them of his confidence in the Assembly; that he had never contemplated its violent dissolution; and that he sincerely desired to unite with the Assembly in consulting for the best interests of the nation. He also declared that he had issued orders for the withdrawal of the troops both from Paris and Versailles, and that, hereafter, the counsels of the National Assembly should be the guide of his administration.[177]

This conciliatory speech was received by the mass of the deputies with rapturous applause. The aristocratic party were, however, greatly chagrined, and, retiring by themselves, with whispers and frowns gave vent to their vexation; but the general applause drowned the feeble murmurs of the nobles. Nearly the whole Assembly rose in honor of the king as he left, and, surrounding him in tumultuous joy, they escorted him back to his palace. A vast crowd from Paris and Versailles thronged the streets, filling the air with their loyal and congratulatory shouts. The queen, who was sitting anxiously in her boudoir, heard the uproar and was greatly terrified. Soon it was announced to her that the king was returning in triumph: she stepped out upon a balcony and looked down upon the broad avenue filled with a countless multitude. The king was on foot; the deputies encircled him, interlacing their arms to protect him from the crowd, which was surging tumultuously around with every manifestation of attachment and joy.

The people really loved the kind-hearted king; but they already understood that foible in his character which eventually led to his ruin. A woman of Versailles pressed her way through the deputies to the king and, with great simplicity, said,

"Oh, my king! are you quite sincere? Will they not make you change your mind again?"

"No," replied the king, "I will never change."

The feeble Louis did not know himself. He was then sincere; but in less than an hour he was again wavering, being undecided whether to carry out his pacific policy of respecting the just demands of the people, or to fly from the realm, and invoke the aid of foreign despots, to quench the

rising flame of liberty in blood. It was well known that the queen, the brothers of the king, and the Polignacs, were the implacable foes of reform, and that it was through their councils that the Assembly and the nation were menaced with violence.[178]

As soon as the queen was seen upon the balcony, with her son and daughter by her side, the shouts of applause were redoubled. But now murmurs began to mingle with the acclaim. A few execrations were heard against the obnoxious members of the court. Still the general voice was enthusiastic in loyalty; and when the queen descended to the foot of the marble stairs and threw herself into the arms of the king, every murmur was hushed, and confidence and happiness seemed to fill all hearts.[179]

A cabinet council was immediately held in the palace to deliberate respecting the next step to be taken. The Assembly returned to their hall and immediately chose a deputation of one hundred members, with La Fayette at their head, to convey to the municipal government at the Hôtel de Ville in Paris the joyful tidings of their reconciliation with the king. A courier was sent in advance to inform of the approach of the delegation.

It was now two o'clock in the afternoon. The deputation left Versailles accompanied by an immense escort of citizen-soldiers, and followed by a crowd which could not be numbered. They were received in Paris with almost delirious enthusiasm. Throughout the whole night the citizens, men, women, and children, had been at work piling up barricades, tearing up the pavements, and preparing with every conceivable weapon and measure of offense and defense to meet the contemplated attack from the artillery and cavalry of the crown. Fathers and mothers, pallid with terror, had anticipated the awful scenes of the sack of the city by a brutal soldiery. Inexpressible was the joy to which they surrendered themselves in finding that the king now openly avowed himself their friend and espoused the popular cause. Windows and balconies were crowded, the streets were strewn with flowers, and the deputies were greeted with waving of handkerchiefs and cheers.

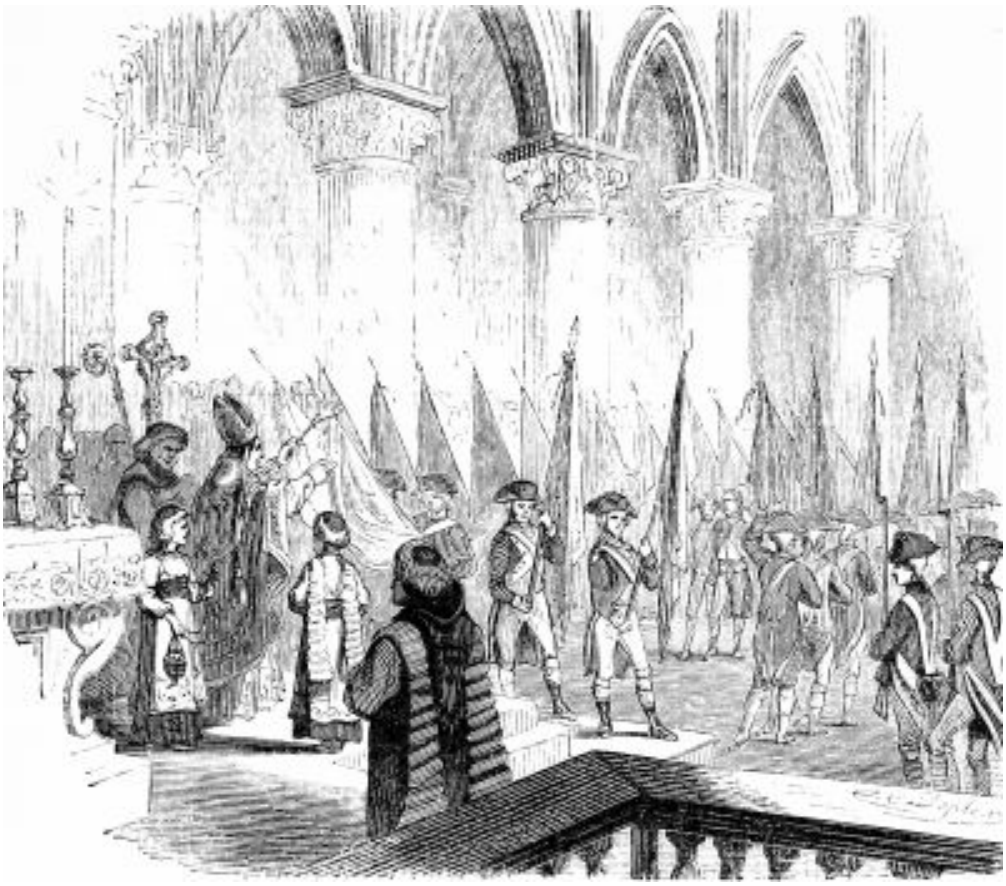
At the Place Louis XV. the deputies left their carriages and were conducted through the garden of the Tuileries, greeted by the music of martial bands, to the vestibule of the palace. There they were met by a

committee of the municipality, with one of the clergy, the Abbé Fauchet, at its head, who accompanied them to the Hôtel de Ville.

La Fayette addressed the electors, informing them of the king's speech, and describing the monarch's return to his palace in the midst of the National Assembly and of the people of Versailles, "protected by their love and their inviolable fidelity." Lally Tollendal, who was remarkable for his eloquence, then addressed the electors and the assembled multitude. He spoke of the king, whom he loved, in the highest terms of eulogy, and in a strain so persuasive and spirit-stirring that he was immediately crowned with a wreath of flowers, and, in a tumult of transport, was carried in triumph to the window to receive the applause of the thousands who filled the streets. Love for the king seemed to be an instinct with the populace. Shouts of "Vive le Roi!" rose from the vast assembly, which were reverberated from street to street through all the thronged thoroughfares of the metropolis.

The king had authorized the establishment of the National Guard, but the guard was yet without a commander-in-chief. The government of Paris also, by the death of Flesselles, had no head. There was in the hall of the Assembly a bust of La Fayette which had been presented by the United States to the city of Paris. It stood by the side of the bust of Washington. As the momentous question was discussed, who should be intrusted with the command of the National Guard, a body which now numbered hundreds of thousands and was spread all over the kingdom, Moreau de St. Mèry, Chairman of the Municipality, rose, and, without uttering a word, silently pointed to the bust of La Fayette. The gesture was decisive. A general shout of acclaim filled the room. He who had fought the battles of liberty in America was thus intrusted with the command of the citizen-soldiery of France. M. Bailly was then chosen successor of Flesselles, not with the title of Prévôt des Marchands, but with the more comprehensive one of Mayor of Paris.

On the 27th of September the banners of the National Guard, each one of which had been previously consecrated in the church of its district, were all taken to the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame, and there, with the utmost pomp of civil, military, and religious ceremonies, were consecrated to the service of God and the nation.



BLESSING THE BANNERS.

FOOTNOTES:

174. It has not subsequently appeared that there was any conclusive evidence of the existence of this letter.

175. Histoire Des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros, p. 17.

176. The Duchess of Polignac was the most intimate friend of the queen. Though enjoying an income from the crown of two hundred and ninety thousand francs ($58,400) annually, she was deemed, when compared with others of the nobles, poor. The queen had assigned her a magnificent suite of apartments in the Palace of Versailles at the head of the marble stairs. The saloons of the duchess were the rendezvous of the court in all its plottings against the people. Here originated that aristocratic club which called into being antagonistic popular clubs all over the kingdom.—*Madame Campan*, vol. i., p. 139; *Weber*, vol. ii., p. 23.

177. Hist. Phil. de la Rev. Fr., par Ant. Fantin Desodoards, vol. i., p. 165; M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, vol. i., p. 69; Hist. Parlem., vol. ii., p. 117.

178. Necker, speaking of the plots of the court, writes, "I could never ascertain certainly what design was contemplated. There were secrets and after-secrets, and I am convinced that the

king himself was not in all of them. It was intended, perhaps, according to circumstances, to draw the monarch into measures which they did not dare to mention to him beforehand."—Vol. ii., p. 85.

179. Madame Campan's Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, vol. ii., p. 48.

Chapter XV.
The King Visits Paris

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Views of the Patriots.—Pardon of the French Guards.—Religious Ceremonies.—Recall of Necker.—The King visits Paris.—Action of the Clergy.—The King at the Hôtel de Ville.—Return of the King to Versailles.—Count d'Artois, the Polignacs, and others leave France.—Insolence of the Servants.—Sufferings of the People.—Persecution of the Corn-dealers.—Berthier of Toulon.—M. Foulon.—Their Assassination.—Humane Attempts of Necker.—Abolition of Feudal Rights.

The new government was now established, consolidated with power which neither the court nor the people as yet even faintly realized. The National Assembly and the municipality of Paris were now supreme. A million of men were ready to draw the sword and spring into the ranks to enforce their decrees. The king was henceforth but a constitutional monarch; though by no means conscious of it, his despotic power had passed away, never to be regained. The Revolution had now made such strides that nothing remained but to carry out those plans which might be deemed essential for the welfare of France. The Revolution thus far had been almost bloodless. And had it not been for the interference of surrounding despots, who combined their armies to rivet anew the chains of feudal aristocracy upon the French people, the subsequent horrors of the Revolution, in all probability, never would have occurred. Men of wisdom and of the purest patriotism were at the head of these popular movements. Every step which had been taken had been wisely taken. The object which all sought was *reform*, not *revolution*—the reign of a constitutional monarchy, like that of England, not the reign of terror.

A republic was not then even thought of. A monarchy was in accordance with the habits and tastes of the people, and would leave them still in sympathy with the great family of governments which surrounded

them. La Fayette, Talleyrand, Sièyes, Mirabeau, Bailly, and all the other leaders in this great movement, wished only to infuse the spirit of personal liberty into the monarchy of France.

But when all the surrounding despotisms combined and put their armies in motion to invade France, determined that the French people should not be free, and when the aristocracy of France combined with these foreign invaders to enslave anew these millions who had just broken their chains, a spirit of desperation was roused which led to all the woes which ensued. We can not tell what would have been the result had there not been the combination of these foreign kings, but we *do* know that the results which *did* ensue were the direct and legitimate consequence of that combination.

It will be remembered that the French Guards, espousing the popular side, had refused to fire upon the people. This disobedience to the royal officers was, of course, an act of treason. The Duke of Liancourt, speaking in behalf of the king, said, "The king *pardons* the French Guards." At the utterance of the obnoxious word *pardon*, a murmur of displeasure ran through the hall. Some of the guards who were present immediately advanced to the platform, and one, as the organ of the rest, said, firmly and nobly,

"We can not accept a *pardon*. We need none. In serving the nation we serve the king; and the scenes now transpiring prove it."

The laconic speech was greeted with thunders of applause, and nothing more was said about a pardon. The lower clergy, who were active in these movements, were not unmindful of their obligations to God. The whole people seemed to sympathize in this religious sentiment. At the suggestion of the Archbishop of Paris a Te Deum was promptly voted, and the electors, deputies, and new magistrates, accompanied by an immense concourse of citizens, and escorted by the French Guards, repaired to the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame, where the solemn chant of thanksgiving was devoutly offered. La Fayette and Bailly then took the oath of office.

Upon the return of the deputation to the Assembly at Versailles, Lally Tollendal reported that the universal cry of the Parisians was for the recall of Necker, with which minister the popular cause was held to be identified. A motion was immediately introduced to send a deputation to the king soliciting his recall. They had but just entered upon the discussion of this

question when a message was received from Louis announcing the dismissal of the obnoxious ministers, accompanied by an unsealed letter addressed to Necker, summoning him to return to his post. Inspired by gratitude for this act, the Assembly immediately addressed a vote of thanks to the king.

The populace of Paris had expressed the earnest wish that the king would pay them a visit. During the afternoon and evening of the 16th, the question was earnestly discussed by the court at Versailles, whether the king should fly from the kingdom, protected by the foreign troops whom he could gather around him, and seek the assistance of foreign powers, or whether he should continue to express acquiescence in the popular movement and visit the people in Paris. The queen was in favor of escape. She told Madame Campan that, after a long discussion at which she was present, the king, impatient and weary, said, "Well, gentlemen, we must decide. Must I go away, or stay? I am ready to do either." "The majority," the queen continued, "were for the king's stay. Time will show whether the right choice has been made."[180]

The king was very apprehensive that in going powerless to Paris he might be assassinated. In preparation of the event, he partook of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and nominated his brother, subsequently Louis XVIII., Lieutenant of France, in case of his detention or death. Early the next morning, the 17th of July, he took an affecting leave of his weeping, distracted family, to visit the tumultuous metropolis. His pale and melancholy countenance impressed every observer. The queen, who was bitterly hostile to the movement, was almost in despair. She immediately retired to her chamber, and employed herself in writing an address to the Assembly, which she determined to present in person in case the king should be detained a prisoner.[181]

It was ten o'clock in the morning when the king left Versailles. He rode in an unostentatious carriage, without any guards, but surrounded by the whole body of the deputies on foot.[182]

It was three o'clock in the afternoon before the long procession arrived at the gates of the city. Thus far they had proceeded in silence. M. Bailly, the newly-appointed mayor, then, met him and presented him with the keys of the city, saying "These are the keys presented to Henry the Fourth.

He had reconquered his people. Now the people have reconquered their king."

Two hundred thousand men, now composing the National Guard, were marshaled in military array to receive their monarch. They lined the avenue four or five men deep from the bridge of Sevres to the Hôtel de Ville. They had but 30,000 muskets and 50,000 pikes. The rest were armed with sabres, lances, scythes, and pitchforks. The Revolution thus far was the movement, not of a party, but of the nation. Even matrons and young girls were seen standing armed by the side of their husbands and fathers. The clergy, lower clergy, and some of the bishops, not forgetting that they were men and citizens, were there also in this hour of their country's peril, consecrating all their influence to the cause of freedom. They did not ingloriously take refuge beneath their clerical robes from the responsibilities of this greatest of conflicts for human rights. Shouts were continually heard swelling from the multitude of "Vive la Nation!" As yet not a voice had been heard exclaiming "Vive le Roi!" The people had again become suspicious. Rumors of the unrelenting hostility of the court had been circulating through the crowd, and there were many fears that the ever-vacillating king would again espouse the cause of aristocratic usurpation. Passing through these lines of the National Guard, with the whole population of Paris thronging the house-tops, the balconies, and the pavements, the king at length arrived, at four o'clock in the afternoon, at the Hôtel de Ville, the seat of the new government. He alighted from his carriage and ascended the stairs beneath a canopy of steel formed by the grenadiers crossing their bayonets over his head. This was intended not as a humiliation, but as a singular act of honor.[183]

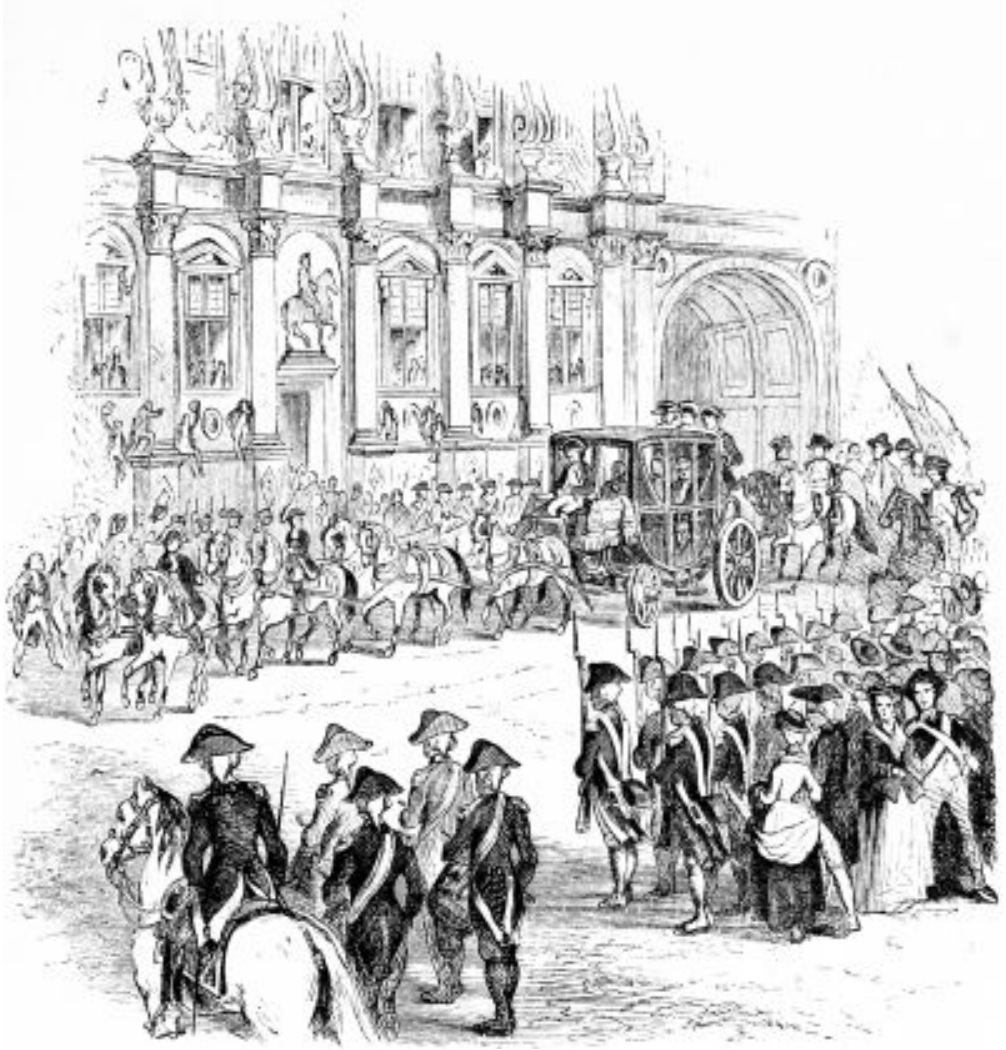
The king took his position in the centre of the spacious hall, which presented an extraordinary aspect. It was crowded with the notabilities of the city and of the realm, and those near the centre with true French politeness dropped upon their knees, that those more remote might have a view of the king. Bailly then presented the king with the tricolored cockade. He received it, and immediately pinned it upon his hat. This was the adoption of the popular cause. It was received with a shout of enthusiasm, and "Vive le Roi!" burst from all lips with almost delirious energy. Tears gushed into the eyes of the king, and, turning to one of his

suite, M. de Cubieres, he said, "My heart stands in need of such shouts from the people."

"Sire," replied Cubieres, "the people love your majesty, and your majesty ought never to have doubted it."

The king rejoined, in accents of deep sensibility, "The French loved Henry the Fourth; and what king ever better deserved to be beloved?"

The king could not forget that the affection of the people did not protect Henry from the dagger of the assassin. Moreau de St. Mèrry, president of the Assembly of Electors, in his address to the king, said, "You owed your crown to birth; you are now indebted for it only to your virtues."[184] The minutes of the proceedings of the municipality were then read, and the king, by silence, gave his assent to the appointment of La Fayette as Commander of the National Guard, of Bailly as Mayor of Paris, and to the order for the utter demolition of the Bastille. It was also proposed that a monument should be erected upon its site to Louis XVI., "the Regenerator of public liberty, the Restorer of national prosperity, the Father of the French people." These were, to the monarch, hours of terrific humiliation. He bore them, however, with the spirit of a martyr, struggling in vain to assume the aspect of confidence and cordiality.



ARRIVAL OF THE KING AT THE HÔTEL DE VILLE, JULY 17, 1789.

When Bailly led him to the balcony, to exhibit him to the people with the tricolored cockade upon his hat, and shouts of triumph, like thunder-peals, rose from the myriad throng, tears flooded the eyes of the king, and he bowed his head in silence and sadness, as if presenting himself a victim for the sacrifice. Some one whispered to the monarch that it was expected that he would make an address. Two or three times he attempted it, but his voice was choked with emotion, and he could only, in almost inarticulate accents, exclaim, "You may always rely upon my affection!"

As the king returned through the vast throng to Versailles, the tide of enthusiasm set strongly in his favor. Shouts of "Vive le Roi!" almost deafened his ears. The populace bore him in their arms to his chariot. A woman threw herself upon his neck and wept with joy. Men ran from the

houses with goblets of wine for his postillions and his suite. A few words from his lips then would have re-echoed through the crowd, and might have saved the monarchy. But Louis was a man of feeble intellect, and of no tact whatever. He was pleased with the homage which was spontaneously offered him, and, stolid in his immense corpulence, sat lolling in his chariot, with a good-natured smile upon his face, but uttered not a word. It was after nine o'clock in the evening when he returned to the palace at Versailles. The queen and her children met him on the stairs, and, convulsively weeping, threw themselves into his arms. Clinging together, they ascended to the saloon. There the queen caught sight of the tricolored cockade, which the king had forgotten to remove from his hat. The queen recoiled, and looking upon it contemptuously, exclaimed, "I did not think that I had married a plebeian." The good-natured king, however, forgot all his humiliations in his safe return, and congratulated himself that no violence had been excited.

"Happily," he said, "no blood has been shed; and it is my firm determination that never shall a drop of French blood be spilled by my order."[185]

While these scenes were transpiring on this the 17th of July, the Count d'Artois, second brother of the king, the Condés, the Polignacs, and most of the other leaders of the aristocratic party fled from France. The conspiracy they had formed had failed, the nation had risen against them, and no reliance could be placed on the vacillating king. Their only hope now was to summon the combined energies of foreign despotisms to arrest the progress of that liberty in France which alike threatened all their thrones. The palace was now forsaken and gloomy as a tomb. For three days the king sadly paced the deserted halls, with none of his old friends to cheer or counsel him but Bensenval and Montmorin. His servants, conscious that he had fallen from his kingly power, became careless even to insolence. Even the French Guard mounted guard at Versailles only on orders received from the Electors at Paris.[186]

On the 19th Bensenval presented an order for the king to sign. A footman entered the cabinet, and looked over the king's shoulder to see what he was writing. Louis, amazed at such unparalleled effrontery, seized the tongs to break the head of the miscreant. Bensenval interposed to

prevent the undignified blow. The king clasped the hand of his friend, and, bursting into tears, thanked him for the interposition. Thus low had fallen the descendant of Louis XIV. in his own palace at Versailles.[187]

There was now, in reality, no government in France. The kingly power was entirely overthrown, and the National Assembly had hardly awoke to the consciousness that all power had passed into its hands. Even in Paris, the municipality, now supreme there, had by no means organized an efficient government. Famine desolated the kingdom. Ages of misrule had so utterly impoverished the people that they were actually dying of starvation. "Bread! bread!" was every where the cry, but bread could not be obtained. Many boiled grass and fern-roots for sustenance. Every where the eye met wan and haggard men in a state of desperation. The king, constitutionally humane, felt deeply these woes of his subjects. With a little apparent ostentation, quite pardonable under the circumstances, he occasionally walked out and administered relief with his own hands to the haggard beggary he every where met. He was by nature one of the kindest of men, but he had hardly a single quality to fit him to be the ruler of a great people. A nation was on the brink of famine, and the monarch was giving gold to beggars instead of introducing vigorous measures for relief.

LOUIS XVI. GIVING MONEY TO THE POOR.

As the National Assembly met on the morning of the 18th of July, reports were brought from all parts of violence and riots. The most vigorous efforts were adopted by the Electors in Paris to supply the city with food. Nearly a million of people were within its walls. Vast numbers had crowded into the city from the country, hoping to obtain food. No law could restrain such multitudes of men, actually dying of hunger. As it was better to die by the bullet or the bayonet than by starvation, they would, at all hazards, break into the dwellings of the wealthy, and into magazines, to obtain food, unless food in some other way could be provided for them. The disorders of the times had put a stop to all the enterprises of industry, and thus the impoverished millions were left without money, without employment, and without food.

In one of the villages near Paris it was reported that a rich farmer had concealed a large quantity of grain, to enrich himself by its sale at an exorbitant price. A haggard multitude of men, women, and children surrounded his dwelling, and threatened to hang the farmer unless he delivered up his stores. The Assembly hastily sent a deputation of twelve members to attempt to save the unfortunate corn-dealer's life.[188] While engaged in this business, a delegation entered from the Faubourg San Antoine, stating that the wretched inhabitants of that faubourg had for the last five days been without work and without bread, and entreating that some measure might be devised to save them from starvation. Nine thousand dollars were immediately subscribed by the deputies for their relief. Four thousand of this sum were given by the Archbishop of Paris.

PERSECUTION OF THE CORN-DEALERS.

The rage of the people, during these days of distress, was particularly directed against those whom they deemed monopolists, who were accused of keeping from the market the very sources of life. The sufferings of the

people and their desperation were so intense that it was necessary to send military bands from the city of Paris to convoy provisions through the famishing districts. The peasants, who saw their children actually gasping and dying of hunger, would attack the convoys with the ferocity of wolves, and, though it seemed absolutely necessary to resist them even unto death, no one could severely blame them.

There were two men, M. Foulon and M. Berthier, who were conspicuous members of the court, and who had both been very active in their hostility to the popular cause. Upon the overthrow of the Necker ministry, these men were called into the new ministry, antagonistic to the people. It was reported that M. Foulon, who was the father-in-law of M. Berthier, had frequently said, "If the *people* are hungry, let them eat grass. It is good enough for *them*; my horses eat it."[189] He is also stated to have uttered the terrible threat, "France must be mowed as we mow a meadow." He was reputed to be a man of great wealth, and had long been execrated by the people. These brutal remarks, which have never been proved against him, but which were universally believed, and which were in entire harmony with his established character, excited the wrath of the people to the highest pitch.[190]

Berthier, his son-in-law, even the Royalists confess to have been a very hard-hearted man, unscrupulous and grasping.[191] Though fifty years of age he was an atrocious libertine, and seemed to exult in the opportunity of making war upon the Parisians, by whom he was detested. He showed "a diabolical activity," says Michelet, "in collecting arms, troops, every thing together, and in manufacturing cartridges. If Paris was not laid waste with fire and sword it was not his fault."[192]

Both Berthier and Foulon were now at the mercy of the people. Neither the court nor the royal army had any power to protect them, and murmurs loud and deep fell upon their ears. Berthier attempted to escape from France to join the Royalists who had already emigrated. Fleeing by night and hiding by day, in four nights he reached as far as Soissons. Foulon adopted the stratagem of a pretended death. He spread the report that he had died suddenly of apoplexy. He was buried by proxy with great pomp, one of his servants having by chance died at the right moment. He then repaired to the house of a friend, where he concealed himself. He would

have been forgotten had he not been so utterly execrated by all France. Those who knew him best hated him the worst. His servants and vassals detected the fraud, and, hunting him out, found him in the park of his friend.

"You wanted to give *us* hay," said they; "you shall eat some yourself."

The awful hour of blind popular vengeance had come. They tied a truss of hay upon his back, threw a collar of thistles over his neck, and bound a nosegay of nettles upon his breast. They then led him on foot to Paris, to the Hôtel de Ville, and demanded that he should be fairly tried and legally punished. At the same time Berthier was arrested as he was hastening to the frontier.

The municipality were in great perplexity. They had no power to sit in judgment as a criminal court. The old courts were broken up and no new ones had as yet been established. It was six o'clock in the morning when he was presented at the Hôtel de Ville. The news of his arrest spread rapidly through Paris, and the Place de Grève was soon thronged with an excited multitude. Foulon was universally known as well as execrated. La Fayette was anxious to send him to the protection of a prison, that he might subsequently receive a legal trial for his deeds of inhumanity.

"Gentlemen," said La Fayette to the people, "I can not blame your indignation against this man. I have always considered him a great culprit, and no punishment is too severe for him. He shall receive the punishment he merits. But he has accomplices, and we must know them. I will conduct him to the Abbaye, where we will draw up charges against him, and he shall be tried and punished according to the laws."[193]

The people applauded this speech, and Foulon insanely joined with them in the applause. This excited their suspicion that some plot was forming for his rescue. A man from the crowd cried out,

"What is the use of judging a man who has been judged these thirty years?"

This cry was Foulon's death-warrant. It kindled anew the flame of indignation and it now burned unquenchably. The enraged populace clamored for their victim. The surgings of the multitude were like the tumult of the ocean in a storm. The countless thousands pressed on, sweeping electors, judges, and witnesses before them, and Foulon was

seized, no one can tell by whom or how, till at last he was found in the street with a cord around his neck, while the mob were attempting to hang him upon a lamp-post. Twice the iron cut the cord, and the old man on his knees begged for mercy. But the infuriated populace were unrelenting. A third rope was obtained, and the poor man was soon dangling lifeless in the air.

While these scenes were transpiring Berthier was brought into the city. He was in a cabriolet, that the people might have a sight of their inhuman persecutor. A frightful mob surrounded him, filling the air with menaces and execrations. A placard was borne before him with this inscription in large letters:

> "He has devoured the substance of the people; he has been the slave of the rich and the tyrant of the poor; he has robbed the king and France; he has betrayed his country."[194]

THE ASSASSINATION OF BERTHIER.

The miserable wretch was dragged up the steps of the Hôtel de Ville. But the mob was now in the ascendency. There was no longer law or even semblance of authority. An attempt was made by the National Guard to convey him to the Abbaye; but the moment they appeared with their prisoner in the street the crowd fell irresistibly upon him. Seizing a gun, he fought like a tiger; but he soon fell, pierced with bayonets.[195] A dragoon tore out his heart, and carried it dripping with blood to the Hôtel de Ville, saying, "Here is the heart of Berthier!"[196] The man attempted an extenuation of his ferocity by declaring that Berthier had caused the death of his father. His comrades, however, deemed such brutality a disgrace to their corps. They told him that he must die, and that they would all fight him in turn until he was killed. He was killed that night.[197]

These deeds of violence excited the disgust of Bailly, the mayor, and La Fayette. Having such evidence that both the municipality and the National Guard were impotent, both La Fayette and Bailly tendered their resignations.

They were, however, prevailed upon to continue in office by the most earnest solicitations of the friends of France.[198]

A report was spread throughout the kingdom that the fugitive princes and nobles were organizing a force on the frontiers for the invasion of France, that the armies of foreign despots were at their command, and that all the Royalists in France were conspiring to welcome them. The panic which pervaded the kingdom was fearful. France, just beginning to breathe the atmosphere of liberty, was threatened with chains of slavery more heavy than had ever been worn before. The energies of a semi-enfranchised people were roused to the utmost vigor. Every city, and every village of any importance, organized a municipal government in sympathy with the municipality in Paris. The peasantry in the rural districts, hating the nobles who had long oppressed them, attacked and burned their castles. There was a universal rising of the Third Estate against the tyranny of the privileged classes, assailing that tyranny with the only instrument at its command—blind brutal force. In one week three millions of men assumed the military character, and organized themselves for the defense of the kingdom. The tricolored cockade became the national uniform.

The National Assembly, intently occupied in framing a constitution, was greatly disturbed by reports of these wide-spread acts of violence; yet daily delegations arrived with vows of homage from the different provinces, and with their recognition of the authority of the national representatives.

Necker was in exile at Basle. He had left the Polignacs in pride and power at Versailles; *they* now were fugitives. One morning one of the Polignacs hastened to Necker's apartment and informed him of the overthrow of the court and the triumph of the people. Necker had just received these tidings when a courier placed in his hand the letter of the king recalling him to the ministry. The grandest of triumphs greeted him from the moment his carriage entered France until he was received with a delirium of joy in the streets of Paris. The people, who had with lawless

violence punished Foulon and Berthier, who had conspired so inhumanly for the overthrow of their liberties, were determined that others, who with equal malignity had conspired against them, should also be condemned. Necker humanely resolved that an act of general amnesty should be passed. Many of his friends assured him that it was not safe to attempt to secure the passage of such a measure; that the crimes of the leaders of the court were too great to be thus easily forgotten; that the indignant nation, finding Necker pleading the cause of the court, would think that he had been bought over; and that thus he would only secure his own ruin. But Necker, relying upon his popularity, resolved to make the trial. On the 29th of July he repaired to the Hôtel de Ville. As he passed through the streets and entered the spacious hall, he was received with rapturous applause. Deeming his popularity equal to the emergence, he demanded a general amnesty. In the enthusiasm of the moment it was granted by acclamation. Necker retired to his apartments delighted with his success; but before the sun had set he found himself cruelly deceived. The Assembly, led by Mirabeau, remonstrated peremptorily against this usurpation of power by the Municipality of Paris, asserting that that body had no authority either to condemn or to pardon. The measure of amnesty was annulled by the Assembly, and the detention of the prisoners confirmed.

The great question which now agitated the Assembly was, what measures were to be adopted to bring order out of the chaos into which France was plunged. All the old courts were virtually annihilated. No new courts had been organized with the sanction of national authority. The nobles and all their friends, in conference with the emigrants and foreign despots, were conspiring to reinstate the reign of despotic power. The people were in a state of terror. The degraded, the desperate, the vicious, in banditti hordes, were sweeping the country, burning and pillaging indiscriminately. It was proposed to publish a decree enjoining upon the people to demean themselves peaceably, to pay such taxes and duties as were not yet suppressed, and to yield obedience for the present to the old laws of the realm, obnoxious and unjust as they undeniably were.

While this question was under discussion, the Viscount de Noailles and the Duke d'Aguillon, both distinguished members of the nobility, ascended the tribune and declared that it was vain to attempt to quiet the people by force, that the only way of appeasing them was by removing the cause of

their sufferings. They then, though both of them members of the privileged class, nobly avowed the enormity of the aggressions under which, by the name of feudal rights, the people were oppressed, and voted for the repeal of those atrocities.

It is a remarkable fact that in this great revolution the boldest and ablest friends of popular rights came out from the body of the nobles themselves. Some were influenced by as pure motives as can move the human heart. With others, perhaps, selfish and ambitious motives predominated. Among the most active in all these movements, we see La Fayette, Talleyrand, Sièyes, Mirabeau, and the Duke of Orleans. But for the aid of these men, whatever may have been the motives which influenced the one or the other, the popular cause could not have triumphed. And now we find, in the National Assembly, two of the most distinguished of the nobles rising and themselves proposing the utter abolition of all feudal rights.

It was the 4th of August, 1789, when this memorable scene was enacted in the National Assembly, one of the most remarkable which ever transpired on earth. The whole body of the nobles seems to have been seized with a paroxysm of magnanimity and disinterestedness. One of the deputies of the *Tiers Etat*, M. Kerengal, in the dress of a farmer, gave a frightful picture of the sufferings of the people under feudal oppression.[199] There was no more discussion. No voice defended feudality. The nobles, one after another, renounced all their prerogatives. The clergy surrendered their tithes. The deputies of the towns and of the provinces gave up their special privileges, and, in one short night, all those customs and laws by which, for ages, one man had been robbed to enrich another were scattered to the winds. Equality of rights was established between all individuals and all parts of the French territory. Louis XVI. was then proclaimed the restorer of French liberty. It was decreed that a medal should be struck off in his honor, in memory of that glorious night. And when the Archbishop of Paris proposed that God's goodness should be acknowledged in a solemn Te Deum, to be celebrated in the king's chapel, in the presence of the king and of all the members of the National Assembly, it was carried by acclamation. During the whole of this exciting scene, when sacrifices were made such as earth never witnessed before; when nobles surrendered

their titles, their pensions, and their incomes; when towns and corporations surrendered their privileges and pecuniary immunities; when prelates relinquished their tithes and their benefices; not a solitary voice of opposition or remonstrance was heard. The whole Assembly—clergy, nobles, and *Tiers Etat*—moved as one man. "It seemed," says M. Rabaud, "as if France was near being regenerated in the course of a single night. So true it is that the happiness of a people is easily to be accomplished, when those who govern are less occupied with themselves than with the people."[200]

It subsequently, however, appeared that this seeming unanimity was not real. "The impulse," writes Thiers, "was general; but amid this enthusiasm it was easy to see that certain of the privileged persons, so far from being sincere, were desirous only of making matters worse." This was the measure which the unrelenting nobles adopted to regain their power. Finding that they could not resist the torrent, they endeavored to swell its volume and to give impulse to its rush, that it might not only sweep away all the rubbish which through ages had been accumulating, but that it might also deluge every field of fertility, and sweep, in indiscriminate ruin, all the abodes of industry and all the creations of art. It was now their sole endeavor to plunge France into a state of perfect anarchy, with the desperate hope that from the chaos they might rebuild their ancient despotism; that the people, plunged into unparalleled misery, might themselves implore the restoration of the ancient régime.

This combination of the highest of the aristocracy and of the clergy to exasperate the mob immeasurably increased the difficulties of the patriots. The court party, with all its wealth and influence—a wealth and influence which had been accumulating for ages—scattered its emissaries every where to foster discord, to excite insurrection, to stimulate the mob to all brutality, that the Revolution might have an infamous name through Europe, and might be execrated in France. In almost every act of violence which *immediately* succeeded, the hand of these instigators from palaces and castles was distinctly to be seen. Indeed, it was generally supposed that even Berthier and Foulon were wrested from the protection of La Fayette by emissaries of the court. And the British government was so systematically assailed for exciting disturbances in France, that the Duke

of Dorset, British embassador at the time, found it necessary to present a formal contradiction of the charge.

FOOTNOTES:

180. Madame Campan, Memoirs, p. 251.

181. "She got this address by heart," writes Madame Campan. "I remember it began with these words, 'Gentlemen, I come to place in your hands the wife and family of your sovereign. Do not suffer those who have been united in Heaven to be put asunder on earth.' While she was repeating this address her voice was often interrupted by her tears, and by the sorrowful exclamation, 'They will never let him return.'"

182. The Parliamentary History, vol. ii., p. 130, records that 100 deputies accompanied the king; Thiers states 200; Louis Blanc, 240; Michelet, 300 or 400. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, a member of the Assembly, says that the whole body of the deputies accompanied the king; and M. Ant. Fantin Desodoards, an eye-witness, writes, "L'Assemblée National, entière l'accompagnait à pied dans son costume de ceremonie," vol. i., p. 34. The probability is that 100 were chosen, but all went.

183. Michelet, vol. i., p. 173.

184. Histoire de la Revolution Française, par Louis Blanc, vol. ii., p. 420.

185. Madame Campan, Memoirs, etc., ii., 59.

186. Michelet, 186.

187. Michelet, 175.

188. "He was saved only by a deputation of the Assembly, who showed themselves admirable for courage and humanity, risked their lives, and preserved the man only after having begged him of the people on their knees."—*Michelet*, p. 186.

189. Bertrand de Moleville testifies that this was an habitual expression in the mouth of Foulon. —*Annals*, vol. i., p. 347.

190. "The old man (Foulon) believed, by such bravado, to please the young military party, and recommend himself for the day he saw approaching, when the court, wanting to strike some desperate blow, would look out for a hardened villain."—*Michelet*, vol. ii., p. 10.

191. Beaulieu's Memoirs, vol. ii., p. 10.

192. "Foulon had a son-in-law after his own heart—Berthier, the intendant of Paris, a shrewd but hard-hearted man, and unscrupulous, as confessed by the Royalists. A libertine at the age of fifty, in spite of his numerous family, he purchased on all sides, so it was said, little girls twelve years of age. He knew well that he was detested by the Parisians, and was but too happy to find an opportunity of making war upon them."—*Michelet*, p. 184.

193. An appeal to the then existing courts would have secured the trial of Foulon by his own colleagues and accomplices, the ancient magistrates, the only judges then empowered to act. This was evident to all. See Michelet, p. 187.

194. Deux Amis de la Liberté, vol. ii., p. 60.

195. "These people," says Michelet, "whom Mirabeau termed so well the refuse of public contempt, are as if restored to character by punishment. The gallows becomes their apotheosis. They are now become interesting victims—the martyrs of monarchy; their legend will go on increasing in pathetic fictions. Mr. Burke canonized them and prayed on their tomb."—*Historical View of the French Revolution*, p. 190.

196. Sir Archibald Alison, true to his instincts as the advocate of aristocratic usurpation, carefully conceals the character of these men, which drew down upon them the vengeance of the mob. Impartial history, while denouncing the ferocity of the mob, should not conceal those outrages which roused the people to madness.

197. "It is an indisputable fact that the murder of Foulon and Berthier was not looked upon by the majority of the people of Paris with horror and disgust. So unpopular were these two men that their death was viewed as an act of justice, only irregular in its execution. Frenchmen were still accustomed to witness the odious punishment of torture and the wheel; and society may hence learn a lesson that the sight of cruel executions tends to destroy the feelings of humanity."—*France and its Revolutions, by George Long, Esq.*, p. 47.

198. "The people and the militia did actually throng around La Fayette, and promised the utmost obedience in future. On this condition he resumed the command; and subsequently he had the satisfaction of preventing many disturbances by his own energy and the zeal of the troops."—*Thiers*, vol. i., p. 76.

199. "You would have prevented," said Kerengal, "the burning of the chateau, if you had been more prompt in declaring that the terrible arms which they contain, and which for ages have tormented the people, were to be destroyed. Let these arms, the title-deeds, which insult not only modesty but even humanity, which humiliate the human species by requiring men to be yoked to a wagon like beasts of labor, which compel men to pass the night in beating the ponds to prevent the frogs from disturbing the sleep of their voluptuous lords, let them be brought here. Which of us would not make an expiatory pile of these infamous parchments? You can never restore quiet to the people until they are redeemed from the destruction of feudalism."

200. "That night, which an enemy of the Revolution designated at the time the Saint Bartholomew of property, was only the Saint Bartholomew of abuses."—*Miguet*, p. 54.

Chapter XVI.
Forming the Constitution

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An utterly exhausted treasury compelled Louis XVI. and the court of France to call together the States-General. The deputies of the people, triumphing over the privileged classes, resolved themselves into a National Assembly, and then proceeded to the formation of a constitution which should limit the hitherto despotic powers of the crown. Though there were a few individuals of the nobles and of the higher clergy who cordially espoused the popular cause, the great mass of the privileged class clung firmly together in desperate endeavors to regain their iniquitous power. Many of these were now emigrants, scattered throughout Europe, and imploring the interference of foreign courts in their behalf. The old royalist army, some two hundred thousand strong, amply equipped and admirably disciplined, still retained its organization, and was still under its old officers, the nobles; but the rank and file of this army were from the people, and their sympathies were with the popular cause

The nobles were now prepared for the most atrocious act of treason. They wished to surrender the naval arsenals of France to the English fleet, so that England, in possession of the great magazines of war, could throw any number of soldiers into the kingdom unresisted, while the Prussians and Austrians, headed by the emigrant noblesse, should invade France from the east. The English government, however, which subsequently became an accomplice in the conspiracy of the French nobles, by

accepting the surrender of Toulon, was not yet prepared to take the bold step of invading France simply to rivet the chains of despotism upon the French people.

The English embassador, Dorset, who was residing at Versailles, revealed the plot to the ministers of the king. They, however, kept the secret until it was disclosed by an intercepted letter from Dorset to the Count d'Artois (subsequently Charles X). This discovery vastly increased the alarm of the nation. Perils were now multiplying on every side. The most appalling rumors of invasion filled the air. Bands of marauders, haggard, starving, brutal, swept over the country, burning, devouring, and destroying. It was supposed at first that they were the advance battalions of the invaders, sent by the emigrants to chastise France into subjection. Alarm increased to terror. Mothers in almost a delirium of fear sought places of concealment for their children. The peasant in the morning ran to his field to see if it had been laid waste. At night he trembled lest he should awake to behold conflagration and ruin. There was no law. The king's troops were objects of especial dread. The most insolent of the nobles were in command, and with money and wine they sought to bribe especially the Germans and the Swiss to be obedient to their wishes.

It was this peril which armed France. Villages, peasants, all were united to defend themselves against these terrible brigands. The arsenals of the old castles contained arms. Nerved by despair, the roused multitudes simultaneously besieged all these castles, and demanded and seized the weapons necessary for their defense. It was as a movement of magic. A sudden danger, every where menacing, every where worked the same result. In one short week France sprung up armed and ready for war. Three millions of men had come from the furrow and the shop, and fiercely demanded "Where are the brigands? Lead us to meet our foes, whoever and wherever they may be."[201]

The lords in an hour found themselves helpless. The peasants, hitherto so tame and servile, were now soldiers, roused to determination and proud of their newly discovered power. Awful was the retribution. The chateaux blazed—funeral fires of feudality—on every hill and in every valley. One can only be surprised that the hour of retribution should have been delayed for so many ages, and that when it came the infuriated, degraded,

brutalized masses did not proceed to even greater atrocities. Though deeds of cruelty were perpetrated which cause the ear that hears to tingle, still, on the whole, mercy predominated.

In many cases lords who had treated their serfs kindly were protected by their vassals, as children would protect a father. The Marquis of Montfermail was thus shielded from harm. In Dauphiné a castle was assailed during the absence of the lord. His lady was at home alone with the children. The peasants left the castle and its inmates unharmed, destroying only those feudal charters which were the title-deeds of despotism.

These titles, engrossed on fine parchment and embellished with gorgeous seals, were the pride of the noble family—the evidence of their antiquity. They were preserved with great reverence, deposited in costly caskets, which caskets, enveloped in velvet, were safely placed in oaken chests, and those chests, iron-ribbed and with ponderous locks, were guarded in a strong part of the feudal tower. The peasants ever gazed with awe upon the tower of the archives. They understood the significancy of those title-deeds—the badges of their degradation, the authority to which the lords appealed in support of their tyranny, insolence, and nameless outrages.

"Our country-people," writes Michelet, "went straight to the tower. For many centuries that tower had seemed to sneer at the valley, sterilizing, blighting, oppressing it with its deadly shadow. A guardian of the country in barbarous times, standing there as a sentinel, it became later an object of horror. In 1789 what was it but the odious witness of bondage, a perpetual outrage to repeat every morning to the man trudging to his labor the everlasting humiliation of his race? 'Work, work on, son of serfs! Earn for another's profit. Work, and without hope.' Every morning and every evening, for a thousand years, perhaps more, that tower had been cursed. A day came when it was to fall.

"O glorious day, how long have you been in coming! How long our fathers expected and dreamed of you in vain! The hope that their sons would at length behold you was alone able to support them, otherwise they would have no longer consented to live. They would have died in their agony. And what has enabled me, their companion, laboring beside them in the furrow of history and drinking their bitter cup, to revive the suffering

Middle Ages, and yet not die of grief? Was it not you, O glorious day, first day of liberty? I have lived in order to relate your history!"

Thus far the religious sentiment of France, as expressed by nearly all the pastors and the great proportion of their Christian flocks, was warmly in favor of the Revolution. The higher clergy alone, bishops, archbishops, and cardinals, who were usually the younger sons of the nobles, and were thus interested in the perpetuation of abuses, united with the lords. As in the National Assembly so it was in the nation itself, that the working clergy were among the most conspicuous of the sons of freedom. Religious services were held in the churches in grateful commemoration of the fall of the Bastille.[202] The vast cathedral of Nôtre Dame was thronged to listen to a sermon from the Abbé Fauchet, who consecrated to the memory of those who fell on that occasion the homage of his extraordinary eloquence. He selected for his text the words of St. Paul, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty."—Gal. v. 13.

"The false interpreters of the divine oracle," said the abbé, "have wished, in the name of heaven, to keep the people in subjection to the will of their masters. They have consecrated despotism. They have rendered God an accomplice with tyrants. These false teachers exult because it is written, '*Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*.' But that which is not Cæsar's, is it necessary to render to him that? And *liberty* does not belong to Cæsar. It belongs to human nature."[203]

The abbé unquestionably read the divine oracles aright. The corner-stone of true democracy can only be found in the word of God. The revelation there presented of God as a common father, and all mankind as his children, made of one blood, brethren—it is that revelation upon which is founded the great fundamental principle of democracy, equality of rights. The very highest attainment of political wisdom is the realization of the divine word, *"Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.*"

The whole audience were transported with the clear and eloquent enunciation of the politics of the gospel of Christ. As the orator left the sacred cathedral he was greeted with the loudest plaudits. A civic crown was placed upon his brow, and two companies of the National Guard escorted him home, with the waving of banners and the clangor of

trumpets, and through the acclamations of the multitudes who thronged the streets.[204]

While France was in this state of tumult and terror, threatened with invasion from abroad, and harassed by brigands at home, the nobles plotting treason, law powerless, and universal anarchy reigning, the National Assembly was anxiously deliberating to restore order to the country and to usher in the reign of justice and prosperity. The old edifice was destroyed. A new one was to be erected. But there were now three conspicuous parties developing themselves in the Assembly.

The first was composed of the nobles and the higher clergy, who still, as a body, adhered to the court, and who eagerly fomented disorders throughout the kingdom, hoping thus to compel the nation, as the only escape from anarchy, to return to the old monarchy.

The second was composed of the large proportion of the Assembly, sincere, intelligent, patriotic men, earnest for liberty, but for liberty restrained by law. They were almost to a man monarchists, wishing to ingraft *upon the monarchy of France* institutions similar to those of republican America. The English Constitution was in the main their model.

A third party was just beginning to develop itself, small in numbers, of turbulent, visionary, energetic men, eager for the overthrow of all the institutions and customs of the past, and for the sudden introduction of an entirely new era. Making no allowance for the ignorance of the masses, and for the entire inexperience of the French in self-government, they wished to cut loose from all the restraints of liberty and of law, and to plunge into the wildest freedom.

The first and the third classes, the Aristocrats and the ultra-Democrats, joined hand in hand to overthrow the Moderates, as the middle party were called, each hoping thus to introduce the reign of its own principles. Thus they both were ready to exasperate the masses and to encourage violence. These were the two implacable foes against whom the Revolution, and subsequently the Empire under Napoleon, had ever to contend. Despotism and Jacobinism have ever been the two allied foes against rational liberty in France.

The patriots of the middle, or moderate party, who had not as yet assumed any distinctive name, for the parties in the Assembly were but just beginning to marshal their forces for the fight, earnestly deplored all scenes of violence. Such scenes only thwarted their endeavors for the regeneration of France.

The Assembly now engaged with great eagerness in drawing up a declaration of rights, to be presented to the people as the creed of liberty. It was thought that if such a creed could be adopted, based upon those self-evident truths which are in accordance with the universal sense of right, the people might then be led to rally around this creed with a distinct object in view.

For two months, from the 1st of August till the early part of October, the Assembly was engaged in discussing the Bill of Rights and the Constitution. But it was found that there had now suddenly sprung up three Assemblies instead of one, each potent in its sphere, and that between the three a spirit of rivalry and of antagonism was very rapidly being engendered.

The first was the National Assembly at Versailles, originally consisting of twelve hundred deputies, but now dwindled down by emigration and other absence to about eight hundred.

The second was the municipal government of Paris, consisting of three hundred representatives from the different sections or wards of the city, and which held its sessions at the Hôtel de Ville. As Paris considered itself France, the municipality of Paris began to arrogate supreme power.

The third was the colossal assembly of the Parisian populace, an enormous, tumultuous, excitable mass, every day gathered in the garden of the Palais Royal. This assembly, daily becoming more arrogant, often consisted of from ten to twelve thousand. It was continually in session. Here was the rendezvous for all of the lower orders, men and women. Impassioned orators, of great powers of popular eloquence, but ignorant and often utterly unprincipled, mounted tables and chairs, and passionately urged all their crude ideas.

Reflecting men soon began to look upon this assembly with alarm. Its loud murmurs were echoed through the nation, boding only evil; but emancipated France could not commence its career by prohibiting liberty of speech. La Fayette anxiously looked in upon this portentous gathering,

and listened to the falsehood, the exaggerations, and the folly with which its speakers deluded the populace, but he could not interfere. Indeed, it soon became perilous for any one in that assembly to plead the cause of law and order. He was at once accused as an aristocrat, and was in peril of the doom of Berthier and Foulon.

And now suddenly there uprose another power which overshadowed all the rest—the power of a free press. Newspapers and pamphlets deluged the land. They were read universally; for the public mind was so roused that those who could not read themselves eagerly listened to the reading from others, at the corners of the streets, in shops and hovels.[205]

France was now doomed to blood and woe. It is easy to say that if the populace had been virtuous and enlightened all would have gone well; or if the nobles and the higher clergy would have united with the true patriots freedom might have been saved. But the populace were not virtuous and enlightened, and the nobles were so inexorably hostile to all popular rights that they were resolute to whelm France in ruin rather than relinquish their privileges. France, as France then was, could have been saved by no earthly wisdom. The Royalists openly declared that the only chance of restoring the old system of government was to have recourse to civil war, and they were eager to invoke so frightful a remedy.

One of the most popular of the journals was "The Friend of the People," by Marat. This journal already declared that the National Assembly was full of aristocrats, and that it must be dissolved to make way for a better.[206] "We have wrested power," wrote Marat, "from the nobles but to place it in the hands of the moneyed class. What have we gained? The people are still poor and starving. We need another revolution." "Yes," echoed the mob of Paris, "we need another revolution."

The roar from the Palais Royal fell ominously upon the ears of the Assembly at Versailles, and of the municipality at the Hôtel de Ville. And now all the starving trades and employments began to congregate by themselves for discussion and combined action. First came the servants, destitute of place, of shelter, of bread, whose masters had fled from insurgent Paris into the country or had emigrated. The court-yard of the Louvre was their rendezvous. The soldiers debated at the Oratoire, the hair-dressers in the Elysian Fields, and the tailors at the Colonnade.[207]

These bodies soon became, as it were, committees of the great central congress of the populace ever gathered at the Palais Royal.

The noblest men in the National Assembly were already beginning to despond. Firmly, however, they proceeded in the endeavor to reconstruct society upon the basis of justice and liberty. The measure to which their attention was now chiefly devoted was to adopt a Constitution, which was to be prefaced by a Bill of Rights. La Fayette was active in this movement, and was unquestionably assisted by Thomas Jefferson, then American minister at Paris.

This celebrated declaration of rights, adopted on the 18th of August, 1789, was a simple enunciation of those principles which are founded in nature and truth and which are engraven on all hearts. They were axioms upon which every intelligent legislator must proceed in forming a just code of laws. It declares that all mankind are born free and equal; that the objects to be gained by human governments are liberty, the security of property, and protection from oppression; that sovereignty resides in the nation and emanates from the people; that law is the expression of the will of the people; that the expenses of government should be assessed upon the governed in proportion to their property; that all the adult male inhabitants are entitled to vote; that freedom consists in the liberty to do any thing which does not injure another, and should have no limits but its interference with the rights of others.[208]

These were noble sentiments nobly expressed; and, though execrated in monarchical Europe, were revered in republican America. These were the principles against which despotic Europe, coalesced by the genius of William Pitt, rose in arms.[209] The battle was long and bloody. Millions perished. The terrible drama was closed, for a season, by the triumph of despots at Waterloo.[210]

The Assembly now turned its attention to the organization of the legislative body of the nation. The all-absorbing question was whether the National Congress or Parliament should meet in one chamber or in two; if in two, whether the upper house should be an aristocratic, hereditary body, like the House of Lords in the British Parliament, or an elective republican Senate, as in the American Congress. The debate was long and impassioned. The people would not consent to an *hereditary* House of

Lords, which would remain an almost impregnable fortress of aristocratic usurpation. They were, however, inclined to assent to an upper house to be composed exclusively of the clergy and the nobles, but to be elected by the people. To this arrangement the haughty lords peremptorily refused their assent. They were equally opposed to an *election* to the upper house even by the nobles and the clergy, for the high lords and great dignitaries of the Church looked down upon the lower nobility and upon the working clergy with almost as much contempt as they regarded the people. Finding the nobles hostile to any reasonable measure, the masses of the people became more and more irritated. The vast gathering at the Palais Royal soon became unanimous in clamoring for but one chamber. The lords were their enemies, and in a house of lords they could see only a refuge for old and execrable feudality and an insurmountable barrier to reform.[211]

When the vote was taken there were five hundred for a single chamber and but one hundred for two chambers.[212] It was unquestionably a calamity to France that two chambers could not have been organized. But the infatuation of the nobles now for the second time prevented this most salutary check upon hasty legislation.

The next question to be decided was the *royal veto*. All were united that the laws should be presented to the king for his sanction or refusal. The only question was whether the veto should be absolute or limited. That of the King of England is absolute. That of the President of the United States is limited. All France was agitated by this question. Here the aristocracy made their last desperate stand and fought fiercely. Many of the popular party, alarmed in view of the rapid progress of events, advocated the absolute veto. Its inconsistency, however, with all enlightened principles of liberty was too apparent to be concealed. That the caprice of a single man, and he perhaps weak or dissolute, should permanently thwart the decrees of twenty-seven millions of people appeared so absurd that the whole nation rose against it.

The fate of liberty seemed to depend upon this question, as the absolute veto would enable the court, through the king, to annul every popular measure. The crowds in Paris became turbulent and menacing. Threatening letters were sent to members of the National Assembly. The Parisian mob even declared its determination to march to Versailles, and

drive from the Assembly those in favor of the veto. The following letter, addressed to the Bishop of Langres, then president of the Assembly, may be presented as a specimen of many with which the hall was flooded:

> "The patriotic assembly of the Palais Royal have the honor to make it known to you, sir, that if the aristocratic faction, formed by some of the nobility and the clergy, together with one hundred and twenty ignorant and corrupt deputies, continue to disturb the general harmony, and still insist upon the absolute veto, fifteen hundred men are ready to *enlighten* their country seats and houses, and particularly your own."[213]

"I shall never forget," writes Dumont, "my going to Paris one of those days with Mirabeau, and the crowd of people we found waiting for his carriage about Le Say the bookseller's shop. They flung themselves before him, entreating him, with tears in their eyes, not to suffer the absolute veto."

"They were in a phrensy. 'Monsieur le Comte,' said they, 'you are the people's father. You must save us. You must defend us against those villains who are bringing back despotism. If the king gets this veto, what is the use of the National Assembly? We are all slaves! All is undone.'[214] There was as much ability in the tumultuous gathering at the Palais Royal as in the National Assembly, and more of impassioned, fiery eloquence. This disorderly body assumed the name of the Patriotic Assembly, and was hourly increasing in influence and in the boldness of its demands. Camille Desmoulins was one of its most popular speakers. He was polished, keen, witty, having the passions of his ever-varying, ever-excitable audience perfectly at his command. He could play with their emotions at his pleasure, and though not an *earnest* man, for jokers seldom are, he was eager and reckless."[215]

St. Huruge was, however, the great orator of the populace, the Mirabeau of the Palais Royal. A marquis by birth, he had suffered long imprisonment in the Bastille by *lettre de cachet*. Oppression had driven him mad, and *he* was thoroughly earnest. Every day he uttered the most fierce and envenomed invectives against that aristocratic power by whose

heel he had been crushed. He was a man of towering stature, impassioned gesticulation, and with a voice like the roar of a bull.

On Monday, August 30th, there was a report at the Palais Royal that Mirabeau was in danger of arrest. St. Huruge immediately headed a band of fifteen hundred men, and set out for Versailles for his protection. It was a mob threatening violence, and La Fayette, at the head of a detachment of the National Guard, stopped them and drove them back. Murmurs now began to arise against La Fayette and the National Guard. Rumors were set in circulation that La Fayette was in league with the aristocrats. Excitement was again rapidly increasing, as the people feared that, after all, they were to be betrayed and again enslaved.

LA FAYETTE REVIEWING THE NATIONAL GUARD.

The agitated assembly at the Palais Royal sent a deputation to Versailles to Mounier, one of the most influential and truly patriotic of the deputies, announcing to him that twenty thousand men were ready to march to Versailles to drive the aristocrats out of the Assembly. At the same time an address was received by the president from the citizens of Rennes, declaring that those who should vote for the absolute veto were traitors to their country. Under these circumstances, the king sent a message to the National Assembly, stating that he should be satisfied with a limited, or, as it was then called, a *suspensive* veto. In taking the question the absolute veto was rejected, and the suspensive veto adopted

by a vote of 673 to 355. By this measure the veto of the king would suspend the action of any legislative enactment during two subsequent sessions of the Legislature. If, after this, the Legislature still persisted, the king's veto was overruled and the act went into effect. This was giving the king much greater power than the President of the United States possesses. A two-thirds vote of both houses can immediately carry any measure against the veto of the President. Freedom of opinion, of worship, and of the press were also decreed.

These questions being thus settled, it was now voted that the measures thus far adopted were constitutional, not legislative; and that, consequently, they were to be presented to the king, not for his sanction, but for promulgation. It was also voted by acclaim that the crown should be hereditary and the person of the king inviolable, the ministers alone being responsible for the measures of government. To republican eyes these seem like mild measures of reform, though they have been most severely condemned by the majority of writers upon the French Revolution in monarchical Europe. If the nobles had yielded to these reasonable reforms, the horrors which ensued might have been avoided. If combined Europe had not risen in arms against the Revolution, the regeneration of France might, perhaps, have been peacefully achieved.[216]

In every nation there are thousands of the ignorant, degraded, miserable, who have nothing to lose and something to hope from anarchy. The inmates of the dens of crime and infamy, who are only held in check by the strong restraints of law, rejoice in the opportunity to sack the dwellings of the industrious and the wealthy, and to pour the tide of ruin through the homes of the virtuous and the happy. This class of abandoned men and women was appallingly increasing. They flocked to the city from all parts of the kingdom, and Paris was crowded with spectres, emaciate and ragged, whose hideous and haggard features spoke only of vice and misery. Sièyes expressed to Mirabeau his alarm in view of the portentous aspect of affairs.

"You have let the bull loose," Mirabeau replied, "and now you complain that he butts with his horns."[217]

Much has been said respecting the *motives* which influenced Mirabeau.

Whatever his motives may have been, his conduct was consistent. All his words and actions were in favor of liberty sustained by strong law. He wished for the overthrow of aristocratic insolence and feudal oppression, from which he had so severely suffered. He wished to preserve the monarchical form of government, and to establish a constitution which should secure to all the citizens equality of rights.[218]

Feudality was now destroyed, and a free constitution adopted. Still, business was stagnant, the poor destitute of employment and in a state of starvation. As an act of charity, seventeen thousand men were employed by the municipality of Paris digging on the heights of Montmartre at twenty sous a day. The suffering was so great that the office of the municipality was crowded with tradesmen and merchants imploring employment on these terms. "I used to see," writes the mayor, Bailly, "good tradespeople, mercers and goldsmiths, who prayed to be admitted among the beggars employed at Montmartre in digging the ground. Judge what I suffered."

The city government sunk two thousand dollars a day in selling bread to the poor at less than cost; and yet there were emissaries of the court buying up this bread and destroying it to increase the public distress.[219] On the 19th day of August the city of Paris contained food sufficient but for a single day. Bailly and La Fayette were in an agony of solicitude. So great was the dismay in Paris, that all the rich were leaving. Sixty thousand passports were signed at the Hôtel de Ville in three months.[220]

Armed bands were exploring the country to purchase food wherever it could be found, and convey it to the city. Six hundred of the National Guard were stationed by day and by night to protect the corn-market from attack. It is surprising that when the populace were in such distress so few acts of violence should have been committed.[221]

The kind heart of the king was affected by this misery. He sent nearly all his plate to be melted and coined at the mint for the relief of the poor. This noble example inspired others. General enthusiasm was aroused, and the hall of the National Assembly was crowded with the charitable bringing voluntary contributions for the relief of the poor. Rich men sent in their plate, patriotic ladies presented their caskets of jewelry, and the wives of tradesmen, artists, and mechanics brought the marriage gifts which they had received and the ornaments which embellished their

dwellings. Farmers sent in bags of corn, and even poor women and children offered their mites. A school-boy came with a few pieces of gold which his parents had sent to him for spending-money. This overflowing of charity presented a touching display of the characteristic magnanimity and impulsiveness of the French people.[222]

PATRIOTIC CONTRIBUTIONS.

But private charity, however profuse, is quite inadequate to the wants of a nation. These sums were soon expended, and still the unemployed poor crawled fasting and emaciated about the streets. Necker's plans for loans were frustrated. No one would lend. To whom should he lend? The old régime was dying; the new not yet born. In this terrible emergency Necker proposed the desperate measure of imposing a tax of one quarter of every man's income, declaring that there was no other refuge from bankruptcy. The interest upon the public debt could no longer be paid, the wages of the soldiers were in arrears, and the treasury utterly empty. The

proposal frightened the Assembly, but Mirabeau ascended the tribune, and in one of his most impassioned appeals carried the measure by acclamation.[223] The distracted state of the kingdom, however, prevented the act thus enthusiastically adopted from being carried into effect.[224]

Thomas Jefferson was at this time, as we have before mentioned, the American minister in Paris, and was constantly consulted by the leaders of the Revolution. In his memoirs, speaking of these events, he writes,

> "The first question, whether there should be a king, met with no opposition, and it was readily agreed that the government of France should be monarchical and hereditary.
>
> "Shall the king have a negative on the laws? Shall that negative be absolute, or suspensive only? Shall there be two chambers of legislation, or one only? If two, shall one of them be hereditary, or for life, or for a fixed term; and named by the king or elected by the people?
>
> "These questions found strong differences of opinion, and produced repulsive combinations among the patriots. The aristocracy was cemented by a common principle of preserving the ancient régime, or whatever should be nearest to it. Making this their polar star, they moved in phalanx, gave preponderance on every question to the minorities of the patriots, and always to those who advocated the least change. The features of the new constitution were thus assuming a fearful aspect, and great alarm was produced among the honest patriots by these dissensions in their ranks.
>
> "In this uneasy state of things I received one day a note from the Marquis de la Fayette, informing me that he should bring a party of six or eight friends to ask a dinner of me the next day. I assured him of their welcome. When they arrived, they were La Fayette himself, Dupont, Barnave, Alexander Lameth, Blacon, Mounier, Maubourg, and Dagout. These were leading patriots of honest but differing opinions, sensible of the

necessity of effecting a coalition by mutual sacrifices; knowing each other, and not afraid therefore to unbosom themselves mutually. This last was a material principle in the selection. With this view the marquis had invited the conference, and had fixed the time and place, inadvertently as to the embarrassment under which he might place me.

"The cloth being removed and wine set on the table, after the American manner, the marquis introduced the objects of the conference by summarily reminding them of the state of things in the Assembly, the course which the principles of the Constitution were taking, and the inevitable result, unless checked by more concord among the patriots themselves. He observed that though he also had his opinion, he was ready to sacrifice it to that of his brethren of the same cause; but that a common opinion must now be formed, or the aristocracy would carry every thing, and that, whatever they should now agree on, he, at the head of the national force, would maintain.

"The discussions began at the hour of four, and were continued till ten o'clock in the evening, during which time I was a silent witness to a coolness and candor of argument unusual in the conflicts of political opinion; to a logical reasoning and chaste eloquence disfigured by no gaudy tinsel of rhetoric or declamation, and truly worthy of being placed in parallel with the finest dialogues of antiquity, as handed to us by Plato, by Xenophon, and Cicero. The result was that the king should have a suspensive veto on the laws, that the Legislature should be composed of a single body only, and that to be chosen by the people. This concordat decided the fate of the Constitution. The patriots all rallied to the principles thus settled, carried every question agreeably to them, and reduced the aristocracy to insignificance and impotence."[225]

FOOTNOTES:

201. "Our Revolution," said Napoleon at St. Helena, "was a natural convulsion, as irresistible in its effects as an eruption of Vesuvius. When the mysterious fusion which takes place in the entrails of the earth is at such a crisis that an explosion follows, the eruption bursts forth. The unperceived workings of the discontent of the people follow exactly the same course. In France the sufferings of the people, the moral combinations which produce a revolution, had arrived at maturity, and an explosion accordingly took place."

202. Madame de Genlis, who witnessed the demolition of the Bastille, in her gossiping yet very interesting memoirs, writes, "I experienced the most exquisite joy in witnessing the demolition of that terrible monument, in which had been immured and where had perished, without any judicial forms, so many innocent victims. The desire to have my pupils see it led me to take them from St. Leu to pass a few hours in Paris, that they might see from the garden of Beaumarchais all the people of Paris engaged in destroying the Bastille. It is impossible to give one an idea of that spectacle. It must have been seen to conceive of it as it was. That redoubtable fortress was covered with men, women, and children, toiling with inexpressible ardor upon the loftiest towers and battlements. The astonishing number of workmen, their activity, their enthusiasm, the joy with which they saw this frightful monument of despotism crumbling down, the avenging hands which seemed to be those of Providence, and which annihilated with so much rapidity the work of many ages, all that spectacle spoke equally to the imagination and the heart."—*Mémoires sur le Dix-huitième Siècle et la Revolution Française de Madame la Comtesse de Genlis*, tome iii., p. 261.

203. Histoire des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros, p. 18.

204. "Tyranny," said Fauchet, in reference to the skeletons found in the Bastille, "had sealed them within the walls of those dungeons, which she believed to be eternally impenetrable to the light. The day of revelation is come. The bones have arisen at the voice of French liberty. They depose against centuries of oppression and death, prophesying the regeneration of human nature and the life of nations."—*Dussaulx, Œuvre des Sept Jours.*

205. At St. Helena, the subject of conversation one day turned upon the freedom of the press. The subject was discussed with much animation by the companions of the emperor, he listening attentively to their remarks. "Nothing can resist," said one, "the influence of a free press. It is capable of overthrowing every government, of agitating every society, of destroying every reputation." "It is only its *prohibition*," said another, "which is dangerous. If it be restricted it becomes a mine which must explode; but if left to itself it is merely an unbent bow, that can inflict no wound."

"The *liberty of the press*," said Napoleon, "is not a question open for consideration. Its prohibition under a representative government is a gross anachronism, a downright absurdity. I therefore, on my return from Elba, abandoned the press to all its excesses, and I am confident that the press in no respect contributed to my downfall."

In Napoleon's last letter to his son he writes, "My son will be obliged to allow the liberty of the press. This is a necessity in the present day. The liberty of the press ought to become, in the hands of the government, a powerful auxiliary in diffusing through all the most distant corners of the empire sound doctrines and good principles. To leave it to itself would be to fall asleep upon the brink of danger. On the conclusion of a general peace I would have

instituted a Directory of the Press, composed of the ablest men of the country, and I would have diffused, even to the most distant hamlet, my ideas and my intentions."—*Las Casas.*

206. Mirabeau, Camille Desmoulins, Brissot, Condorcet, Mercier, Carra, Gorsas, Marat, and Barrere, all published journals, and some of them had a very extensive circulation. *L'Ami du Peuple*, by Marat, was a very energetic sheet. Mirabeau printed ten thousand copies of his *Courrier de Province*. But by far the most popular and influential paper was the *Revolutions de Paris*, whose unknown editor was Loustalot, a sincere, earnest, laborious young man, who died in 1792, at the age of twenty-nine. Two hundred thousand copies of his paper were frequently sold.—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 240.

207. Miguet, p. 64.

208. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, a Christian patriot and one of the most active members of the National Assembly, writes: "It is possible that all the kings of Europe may form a coalition against a humble page of writing; but, after a number of cannon-shots, and when those potentates have destroyed three or four hundred thousand men and laid waste twenty countries, it will not be the less true that *men are born free and equal as to their rights, and that the nation is the sovereign*. And it is possible that their obstinacy may have occasioned the discovery of other truths which, but for the wrath of those great princes, mankind would never have thought of."—*Political Reflections*, p. 176.

209. "All the wars of the European Continent against the Revolution and against the Empire were begun by England and supported by English gold. At last the object was attained; not only was the ancient family restored to the throne, but France was reduced to its original limits, its naval force destroyed, and its commerce almost annihilated."—*Encyclopædia Americana, Art. Great Britain*.

210. "William Pitt," said the Emperor Napoleon at St. Helena, "was the master of European policy. He held in his hands the moral fate of nations. He kindled the fire of discord throughout the universe; and his name, like that of Erostratus, will be inscribed in history amid flames, lamentations, and tears. The first sparks of our Revolution, then the resistance that was opposed to the national will, and finally the horrid crimes that ensued, all were his work. Twenty-five years of universal conflagration; the numerous coalitions that added fuel to the flame; the revolution and devastation of Europe; the bloodshed of nations; the frightful debt of England, by which all these horrors were maintained; the pestilential system of loans, by which the people of Europe are oppressed; the general discontent that now prevails—all must be attributed to Pitt.

"Posterity will brand him as a scourge, and the man so lauded in his own time will hereafter be regarded as the genius of evil. Not that I consider him to have been willfully atrocious, or doubt his having entertained the conviction that he was acting right. But St. Bartholomew had also its conscientious advocates. The Pope and cardinals celebrated it by a *Te Deum*, and we have no reason to doubt their having done so in sincerity. Such is the weakness of human reason and judgment! Whether it be the effect of admiration and gratitude or the result of mere instinct and sympathy, Pitt is, and will continue to be, the idol of the European aristocracy. There was, indeed, a touch of the Sylla in his character. His system has kept the popular cause in check and brought about the triumph of the nobles.

"As for Fox, one must not look for his model among the ancients. He is himself a model, and his principles will sooner or later rule the world. Certainly the death of Fox was one of the fatalities of my career. Had his life been prolonged affairs would have taken a totally different

turn. The cause of the people would have triumphed, and we should have established a new order of things in Europe."

211. The higher nobility of Great Britain consists of 26 dukes, 35 marquises, 217 earls, 65 viscounts, 191 barons. Each of these takes the title of *lord* and is entitled by birth to a seat in the House of Lords, if we except the peers of Scotland and Ireland, who have a seat with the lords only by deputation, the Scotch peers choosing 16 and the Irish 28. There are, besides, six archbishops and 42 bishops, who, by virtue of their office, are styled *lords* and have a seat in the House of Lords. The lower nobility, consisting of baronets and knights, have no privileges but the honor of their title. They are somewhere between one and two thousand in number. The higher nobility, including the dignitaries of the Church, six archbishops and 42 bishops, in 1813 amounted to 554 families. The total revenue of the *temporal nobility*, according to Colquhoun, was $25,000,000, which makes an average of about $48,000 a year for each noble family. According to the same authority, the total revenue of the *spiritual lords* was $1,200,000, which would average $25,000 a year for each. The English say that those nobles are exceedingly valuable. They ought to be. They cost enough. See Enc. Am., Art. Great Britain.

212. Michelet. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne says 911 for one, 89 for two. Alison, without giving his authority, states 499 for one, 87 for two.

213. The French Revolutions from 1789 to 1848, by T.W. Redhead, vol. i., p. 59.

214. Souvenirs sur Mirabeau, p. 156.

215. "What will always astonish those who are acquainted with the history of other revolutions is, that in this miserable and famished state of Paris, denuded of all authority, there were, on the whole, but very few serious acts of violence. One word, one reasonable observation, occasionally a jest, was sufficient to check them. On the first days only subsequent to the 14th of July there were instances of violence committed. The people, full of the idea that they were betrayed, sought for their enemies hap-hazard, and were near making some cruel mistakes. M. de la Fayette interposed several times at the critical moment, and was attended to. On these occasions M. de la Fayette was truly admirable. He found in his heart, in his love for order and justice, words and happy sayings above his nature."—*Michelet*, vol. i., p. 227.

216. "I hear it sometimes said that the French should have contented themselves with laying down principles for their own particular state, without spreading abroad those principles among other nations. But is it really their fault if their principles are so general as to be adapted to all men, of all times, and of all countries? Nay, is it not a proof of the excellence of their principles, which depend neither upon ages, nor on prejudices, nor on climates? Have they invented them maliciously, and in order to impose on kings and on the great? And is there any man so silly as to scruple to rebuild his shattered dwelling, because others might be tempted to re-edify theirs? If the French language is understood through all Europe, are the French to blame? Ought they, through fear of being listened to and imitated, to observe a strict silence, or speak a language different from their own?"—*History of the Revolutions of France, by M. Rabaud de St. Etienne*, p. 180.

217. Dumont, vol. i., p. 66.

218. "The particulars of Mirabeau's conduct are not yet thoroughly known, but they are soon likely to be. I have had in my hands several important documents, and especially a paper written in the form of a profession of faith, which constituted his secret treaty with the court. I

am not allowed to give the public any of these documents, or to mention the names of the holders. I can only affirm what the future will sufficiently demonstrate, when all these papers shall have been published.

"What I am able to assert with sincerity is, that Mirabeau never had any hand in the supposed plots of the Duke of Orleans. Mirabeau left Provence with a single object, that of combating arbitrary power, by which he had suffered, and which his reason as well as his sentiments taught him to consider as detestable. In his manners there was great familiarity, which originated in a feeling of his strength. Hence it was that he was frequently supposed to be the friend and accomplice of many persons with whom he had no common interest. I have said, and I repeat it, he had no party. Mirabeau remained poor till his connection with the court. He then watched all parties, strove to make them explain themselves, and was too sensible of his own importance to pledge himself lightly."—*Hist, of the Fr. Rev., by M.A. Thiers*, vol. i., p. 94.

219. Histoire de la Revolution Française, par Villiaumé, p. 54.

220. Revolutions de Paris, t. 11, No. 9, p. 8.

221. "Occasionally loads of flour were seized and detained on their passage by the neighboring localities whose wants were pressing. Versailles and Paris shared together. But Versailles kept, so it was said, the finest part, and made a superior bread. This was a great cause of jealousy. One day, when the people of Versailles had been so imprudent as to turn aside for themselves a supply intended for the Parisians, Bailly, the honest and respectful Bailly, wrote to M. Necker that, if the flour were not restored, thirty thousand men would go and fetch it on the morrow. Fear made him bold. It often happened at midnight that he had but half the flour necessary for the morning market."—*Michelet*, p. 231.

222. Even the courtesans came forward with their contributions. The following letter was received by the National Assembly, accompanied by a purse of gold:

"Gentlemen! I have a heart to love. I have amassed some property in loving. I place it in your hands, a homage to the country. May my example be imitated by my companions of all ranks."—*Hist. des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros*, p. 21.

223. M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, vol. i., 89.

224. Alison.

Chapter XVII.
The Royal Family Carried to Paris

Table of Contents

Waning Popularity of La Fayette.—The King contemplates Flight.—Letter of Admiral d'Estaing.—The Flanders Regiment called to Versailles.—Fête in the Ball-room at Versailles.—Insurrection of the Women; their March to Versailles.—Horrors of the Night of October 5th.—The Royal Family conveyed to Paris.

The press now began to assail Bailly and La Fayette as in league with the aristocrats. The Assembly at the Palais Royal was becoming paramount, a terrific power, threatening ruin to all who should advocate measures of moderation. The most violent harangues roused the populace, and it was evident that they could be easily turned by their leaders into any path of destruction. Threatening letters flooded the National Assembly, and one of great ferocity was signed by St. Huruge. Though he declared it a forgery, he was arrested and imprisoned. The municipal authority also forbade farther meetings in the Palais Royal, and La Fayette, with the National Guard, dispersed the gatherings

The king now seriously contemplated flight, that, at a safe distance from Paris and surrounded by chosen troops, he might dictate terms to his people, or, if they refused, prepare, by the aid of foreign arms, for war. About one hundred and eighty miles northeast of Paris, on the frontiers of France, was the city of Metz. The city contained about fifty thousand inhabitants, and its fortifications, constructed by Vauban, were of the most extensive and formidable kind. The Marquis de Bouille, one of the most devoted servants of the king, and subsequently one of the most active agents in urging the foreign powers to march against France, commanded, in garrison there, thirty thousand picked troops, resolute Royalists, and who had been taught to regard the popular movement with contempt.

The plan was well matured for the king to escape to Metz. There he was to be joined by the court, the nobles with all their retainers, the

ancient parliaments of the provinces, all composed of the aristocratic class, and by all the soldiers whom the Royalist officers could induce to follow them to that rendezvous. Then, by the employment of all the energies of fire and blood, France was to be brought back into subjection to the old régime.

La Fayette knew of this plan, and yet he did not dare to divulge it to the people, for he knew that it would provoke a fierce and terrible outbreak. He saw the peril in which the royal family was involved, and he wished for their protection. He saw the doom with which the liberties of France were menaced, and the liberty for which he was struggling was dearer to him than life. If the king had been either a merciless despot or a reliable friend of liberty, then would La Fayette's path of duty have been plain. But the king was an amiable, kindly-intentioned, weak-minded, vacillating man, quite the tool of the inexorable court.

It is difficult to conceive of a situation more embarrassing than that in which La Fayette was now placed. He was at the head of the National Guard and was informed of all the plots of the court. He wished to be faithful to his sovereign, and wished also to be true to his country. Without the connivance, or at least secret assent of La Fayette, it was hardly possible for the king to escape.

The old admiral D'Estaing was commander of the National Guard at Versailles. He was a man of noble birth, of magnanimous character, and, though with true patriotism he espoused the popular cause, he was, like La Fayette, in favor of a monarchy, and was sincerely friendly to the king. On the 13th of September he dined with La Fayette at Paris. Here the marquis unfolded to the amazed admiral the terrible secret in all its details; that the Baron Breteuil, one of the most implacable enemies of the Revolution, was arranging with the Austrian embassador for the co-operation of Austria; that eighteen regiments had already taken the oath of fidelity to the court; that the Royalists, in large numbers, were already congregating at Metz; that the nobles and the clergy had combined in raising funds, so that fifteen hundred thousand francs ($300,000) a month were secured; that measures were already adopted to besiege Paris, cut off all supplies, and starve the city into subjection; and that more than sixty thousand of the clergy and nobility were pledged to rally around the king.

D'Estaing was appalled by the tidings. He knew that if the populace were informed of the conspiracy it would rouse them to phrensy, that no earthly power could protect the royal family from their fury, and that instantly the fiercest civil war would blaze from the Rhine to the Pyrenees. Aware of the imbecility of the king, and that the queen was the author of every vigorous measure, he immediately addressed a very earnest letter to her. He wrote as follows in a letter long, earnest, and imploring:

> "It is necessary—my duty and my loyalty require it—that I should lay at the feet of the queen the account of the visit which I have paid to Paris. I am praised for sleeping soundly the night before an assault or a naval engagement. I venture to assert that I am not timorous in civil matters, but I must confess to your majesty that I did not close my eyes all night.
>
> "I was told—and, gracious heaven! what would be the consequence if this were circulated among the people—I was told that the king was to be carried off to Metz. La Fayette told me so in a whisper at dinner. I trembled lest a single domestic should overhear him. I observed to him that a word from his lips might become the signal of death. I implore your majesty to grant me an audience some day this week."[226]

Such a secret could not long be kept. It soon began to be openly spoken of in the streets as a suspicion, a rumor. Under pretense of protecting the National Assembly from any violence by the mob from Paris, the king called a regiment to Versailles from Flanders. This was a regiment in whose officers and soldiers he could rely, and which was to aid him in his flight. The troops marched into the city with an imposing array of artillery and infantry, exciting increasing suspicion, and were assembled as a guard around the palace.

It was on the 23d of September that this Flanders regiment entered Versailles, and were stationed around the regal chateau, thus doubling the body-guard of the king. It was also observed that a very unusual number of officers crowded the streets of Versailles, estimated at from a thousand to twelve hundred.[227] A dinner was given to these officers on the 1st of

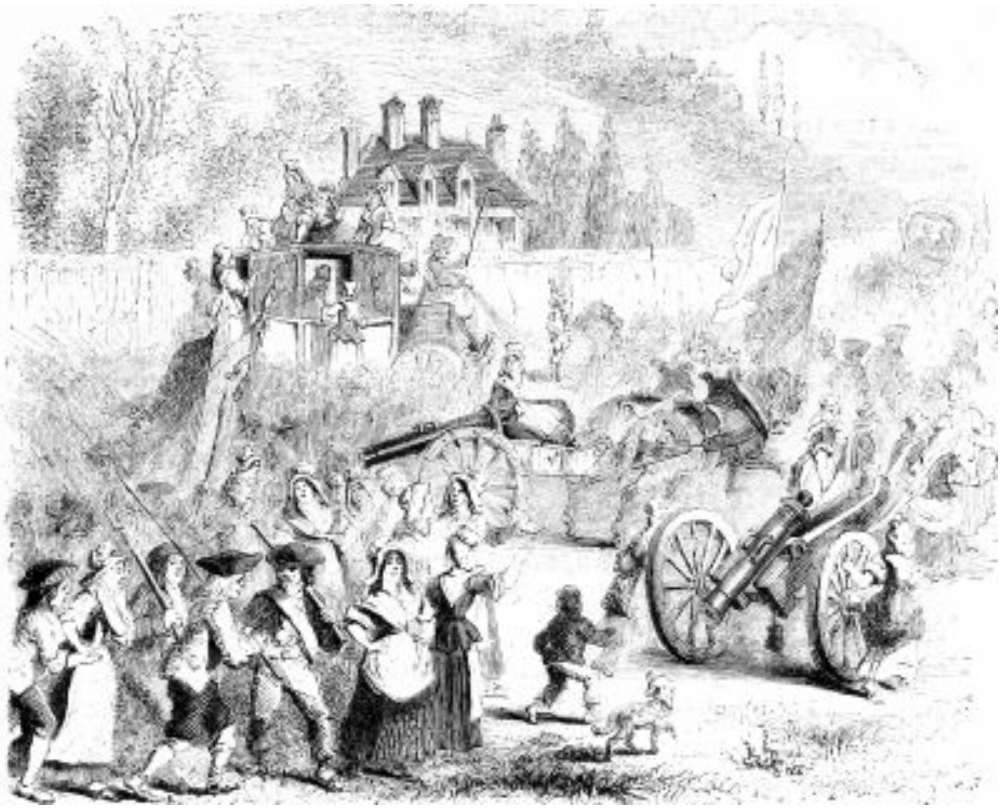
October, in the hall of the Opera at the palace. No expense was spared to add splendor to the *fête*, to which all were invited who could probably be led to co-operate with the court. Wine flowed freely, and, deep in the hours of the night, when all heads were delirious, the king and queen, with the young dauphin, entered the banqueting-hall. They were received with almost phrensied acclaim. The boxes of the Opera were thronged with ladies of the court, adding to the enthusiasm. The king, the queen, the dauphin, were toasted with delirious shouts. When some one proposed "the nation," the toast was scornfully rejected. As the royal family made the tour of the tables, the band struck up the air, "O Richard, O my king, the world is all forsaking thee." The officers leaped upon the chairs and the tables, drew their swords, and vowed eternal fidelity to the king. And now ensued a scene which no language can describe. The officers clambered into the boxes, and received the cordial greetings of the ladies; the revolutionary movement was cursed intensely; the tricolored cockade, the badge of popular rights, was trampled under foot, and the white cockade, the emblem of Bourbon power, was accepted in its stead from the hands of the ladies. The next day there was another similar entertainment in the palace, to which a still larger number of guests were invited, and the convivialities were still more exciting and violent. The courtiers, with that fatuity which ever marked their conduct, were now so encouraged, that they began with insolent menaces to manifest their exultation.

FESTIVAL IN THE BALL-ROOM AT VERSAILLES, OCT. 1, 1789.

The tidings of these *fêtes* spread rapidly through Versailles and Paris, exciting intense indignation. The court was feasting; the people starving. Versailles was filled with rejoicing; Paris with mourning. Despotism was exulting in its anticipated triumph, while the nation was threatened with the loss of its newly-acquired rights. The king had thus far delayed giving his assent to the Constitution. Disquietude pervaded the National Assembly, and confused murmurs filled the thoroughfares of Paris—terrible rumors of the approaching war, of the league with the German princes, of the increasing famine, and the threatened blockade of Paris. "We must bring the king to Paris," all said, "or the court will carry him off, and war will immediately be commenced."

The morning of the 5th of October dawned, dark, cold, and stormy. A dismal rain flooded the streets. There were thousands in Paris that

morning who had eaten nothing for thirty hours.[228] The women, in particular, of the humbler class, were in an awful state of destitution and misery. The populace of Paris were actually starving. An energetic woman, half delirious with woe, seized a drum, and strode through the streets beating it violently, occasionally shrieking, "Bread! bread!" She soon collected a crowd of women, which rapidly increased from a few hundred to seven or eight thousand. The men gazed with wonder upon this strange apparition, such as earth had, perhaps, never seen before. Like a swelling inundation the living flood rolled through the streets, and soon the cry was heard, "To Versailles!" As by a common instinct, the tumultuous mass rushed along by the side of the Tuileries and through the Elysian Fields toward Versailles. A few of the more fierce and brutal of the women had guns or pistols. Chancing to find a couple of cannon, they seized them, and also horses to drag the ponderous engines, upon which female furies placed themselves astride, singing revolutionary songs.



THE WOMEN OF PARIS MARCHING TO VERSAILLES.

La Fayette gazed appalled upon the strange phenomenon. The troops of the National Guard refused to arrest their course, declaring that they could not resist starving women, who were going to implore bread of their king. La Fayette was powerless. He had under arms that morning thirty-five thousand troops, cavalry, infantry, and artillery. He could only follow the women, to watch the opening of events. Behind these troops advancing in all the glittering panoply of war, followed a straggling mass of, no one can tell how many thousands of the populace of Paris, of all classes, characters, conditions. The city seemed emptied of its inhabitants, as the road to Versailles, ten or twelve miles in length, was filled with the tumultuous multitude. No one, apparently, had any definite object, but each one was going to see what the others would do.

Couriers were sent forward to warn the king and queen of the impending peril. The good-natured, silly king had gone to Meudon to amuse himself in chasing hares. Nothing can more conclusively show his utter incapacity to govern a great kingdom, than that he should have been so employed at such an hour. The king was sent for, and speedily returned to Versailles. Marie Antoinette had all the energy and heroism of her mother, Maria Theresa. When entreated immediately to secure her escape with her two children, she replied,

> "Nothing shall induce me to be separated from my husband. I know that they seek my life; but I am the daughter of Maria Theresa, and have learned not to fear death."

The king was entreated to escape, but he was fearful that his flight might embolden the Assembly to declare the throne vacant, and to place the crown upon the head of the Duke of Orleans, who had, with that object probably in view, vociferously espoused the popular cause. From the windows of Versailles the royal family soon descried the vast multitude plodding along through the mud and the rain as they approached Versailles. It is said that there were some men in the mob, disguised as women, who gave impulse and direction to the mass. A man by the name of Maillard, of gigantic stature, and possessed of wonderful tact, succeeded in obtaining the post of leader. In this alarming state of affairs, the king sent to the Assembly a partial acceptance of the Constitution. As

the Assembly were discussing this question, the women arrived at the hall. Maillard entered, and the women crowded after him. Respectfully, but earnestly, on behalf of the women, he represented the starving condition of Paris, and complained of the insult which the nation had received in the fête at the palace.

It was now three o'clock in the afternoon. The rain was still falling. A dark, stormy night was at hand, and the streets of Versailles were filled with countless thousands of the most desperate men and women, utterly destitute of shelter. The Assembly, in alarm, requested their president, M. Mounier, to go to the palace and petition for fresh measures of relief. M. Mounier was compelled to allow twelve women to accompany him. The king received them kindly. The women had adroitly selected, as the leader of their deputation, a very beautiful young flower-girl, but seventeen years of age, of remarkably graceful form and lovely features. The girl, overcome by her sensations, endeavored in vain to speak, and fainted. The king took her in his arms, embraced her as if she had been his child, and was so paternal that he completely won the hearts of all the women. They left the palace with such enthusiastic accounts of the goodness of the king, that the Amazons on the outside accused them of having been bribed, and, in their rage, were ready to tear them in pieces. The poor flower-girl would have been hanged with garters to a lamp-post had not the soldiers rescued her.

The king now summoned a council, which continued in session until ten o'clock. Still, by some unpardonable neglect, no measures were adopted to provide for the wants of the famished mob. It was nearly seven o'clock in the evening before La Fayette arrived with the National Guard.[229] The soldiers of the guard, intelligent citizens, were only to be controlled by the *personal influence* of their general. *Authority* is only established by time and consolidated institutions. La Fayette hastened to the palace to assure the royal family that every thing in his power should be done to secure their safety. The king, however, would not intrust the guard of the palace to La Fayette, as he thought he could place more reliance in the Flanders regiment, the Swiss mercenaries, and his own Life-Guard, than in the National Guard, who were all devoted to the popular cause.

In the confusion of those dreadful hours, all the entrances to the palace had not been defended. La Fayette, however, stationed an effectual guard at all the outposts which had been assigned to him. Through all the hours of the night, until five o'clock in the morning, La Fayette was sleeplessly engaged sending out patrols and watching over the public peace. Then, finding all tranquil, he threw himself upon a sofa for rest, having been constantly and anxiously employed for the last twenty-four hours. Groups of shivering, famished people were gathered around large fires, which they had built in the streets, and in one place they were devouring the half-roasted flesh of a horse which they had killed. The queen, worn out with sleeplessness, had retired to her chamber. The king had also gone to his chamber, which was connected with that of the queen by a hall, through which they could mutually pass. Two soldiers guarded the door of the queen's chamber. Some of the mob, prowling around the palace, found a gate unguarded, and, entering the palace without any obstruction, ascended the stairs, and, pressing blindly on, came to the door of the queen's apartment. The soldiers heroically resisted them, and shouted to others to save the queen. She heard the cry, and, springing from her bed, rushed in her night-clothes to the king's room. The brigands pushed resolutely forward, and found the royal bed forsaken. A number of the Life-Guards hastened to the spot, and arrested their farther progress; and the soldiers of La Fayette, who had been stationed at a little distance, hearing the tumult, hastened to their aid.

The noise roused the mob, and a conflict immediately ensued between the soldiers and the phrensied multitude. La Fayette, who had not yet fallen asleep, sprung from his couch, and, hastening to the palace, found several of the king's troops on the point of being slaughtered. One of the brigands aimed a musket at La Fayette, but the mob seized him and dashed out his brains upon the pavement. The Life-Guards and the Grenadiers of La Fayette soon cleared the palace; and the whole court acknowledged that they were indebted to La Fayette for their lives. Madame Adelaide, the queen's aunt, threw her arms around him, exclaiming "General, you have saved us."[230]

HEROIC DEFENSE OF THE ROYAL APARTMENTS BY THE GARDE DU CORPS, OCT. 5, 1789.

The morning of the 6th was now dawning, and the whole multitude, swarming around the palace, demanded as with one voice that the king should go to Paris. A council was held, and it was decided by the court that the king should comply. Slips of paper announcing the decision were thrown to the people from the windows. Loud shouts now rose of "Long live the King!" But threatening voices were raised against the queen, who was hated as an Austrian, and as one who was endeavoring to bring the armies of Austria to crush liberty in France.

"Madame," said La Fayette to the queen, "the king goes to Paris; what will you do?"

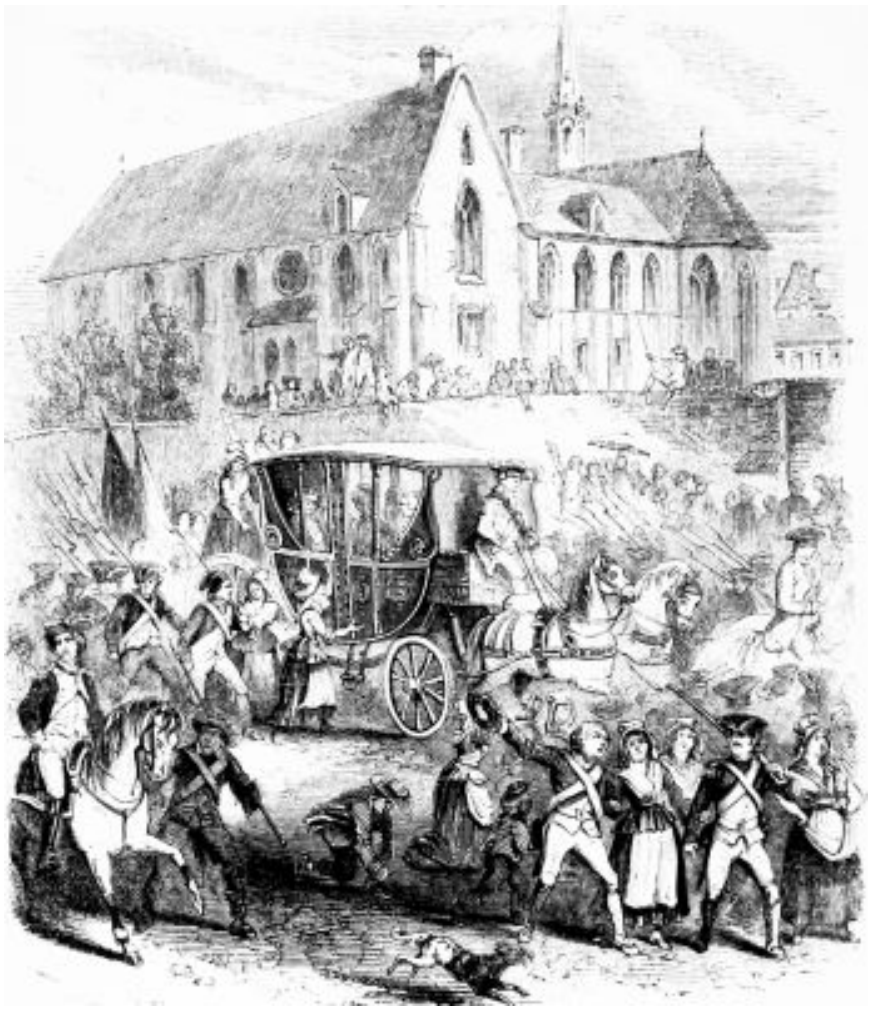
"Accompany the king," was the queen's undaunted reply.

"Come with me, then," rejoined the general.

He led the queen upon a balcony, from whence she looked out upon the multitude, agitated like the ocean in a storm. All eyes were speedily fixed upon her as she stood by the side of La Fayette, and held by the hand her little son, the dauphin. The murmurs of the crowd were immediately succeeded by expressions of admiration. La Fayette took her hand, and, raising it to his lips, respectfully kissed it. An almost universal shout of "Long live the Queen!" was the response of the multitude to this graceful and well-timed act. The queen then stepped back into the room, and said to La Fayette, "My guards, can you not do something for them?" "Give me one," said La Fayette, and, leading the soldier to the balcony, he presented him to the people, and handed him the tricolored cockade. The guard kissed it, and placed it on his hat. The people were satisfied, reconciled, and cheered with hearty plaudits. Many of the garde du corps had been taken prisoners, and they all would have been murdered by the mob but for the vigorous efforts of La Fayette to rescue them from their hands.

LA FAYETTE RESCUING THE GARDE DU CORPS, OCT. 6, 1789.

The Assembly, being apprised of the king's intention to go to Paris, passed a resolution that the Assembly was inseparable from the person of the king, and nominated a hundred deputies to accompany him to the metropolis. Two of the king's body-guard had been killed, and some wretches had cut off their heads, and were parading them about on pikes.[231]



THE ROYAL FAMILY CONVEYED TO PARIS, OCT. 6, 1789.

It was one o'clock when the carriages containing the royal family left Versailles.[232] The whole mob of Paris, men and women, a tumultuous, clamorous multitude, went in advance. Following immediately the carriages of the court came the hundred deputies, also in coaches. Then came the National Guard. Carts laden with corn and flour, escorted by Grenadiers, followed the immense train. None were so malignant and merciless as the degraded women who composed so large a part of this throng. "We shall now," they exclaimed, "have bread, for we have with us the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's boy."

It required seven hours for this unwieldy mass to urge its slow progress to Paris. The king was conducted to the Hôtel de Ville, where he was received by M. Bailly, the mayor. The royal family descended from their carriages by torch-light, and entered the great hall, where they were

received with acclamations. After the ceremony of reception by the municipality of Paris was over, the king and his family were conducted to the Tuileries. The vast palace had not been the residence of the royal family for a hundred years, and its spacious and poorly-furnished apartments presented but a cheerless aspect. The National Guard were stationed around the palace, and thus La Fayette was made responsible for the safe-keeping of the person of the king. Thus terminated the eventful days of the 5th and 6th of October, 1789. The king was now virtually a prisoner, and the nobles could no longer avail themselves of his name in enforcing, by the aid of foreign armies, despotism upon France.

FOOTNOTES:

225. Mounier, who was strongly in favor of two chambers and an absolute veto, in his *Report to his Constituents*, writes, in reference to some private and friendly conferences held at this time:

"These conferences, twice renewed, were unsuccessful. They were recommenced at the house of an American known for his abilities and his virtues, who had both the experience and the theory of the institutions proper for maintaining liberty. He gave an opinion in favor of my principles."

This American was unquestionably Thomas Jefferson. He saw the peril with which the Revolution was menaced, and that freedom needed as strong a guard against the blind impulses of the populace as against the encroachments of the court. Two houses might perhaps have checked the rush to ruin, but could hardly have averted the disaster. For ages the nobles had been "sowing the wind." It was the decree of God that they should "reap the whirlwind." "He visiteth the iniquities of the fathers upon the children."

226. Brouillon: le Lettre de M. d'Estaing à la Reine (in Histoire Parlementaire, vol. iii., p. 24).

227. "Le ministre de la guerre multiplia les congés de semestre, afin d'avoir un corps de volontaires royaux, composé de douze cent cents officiers."—*Villiaumé*, p. 34.

228. Moniteur, vol. i., p. 568. Histoire de Deux Amis de la Liberté, t. iii.

229. Thiers, vol. i., p. 106.

230. "M. de la Fayette has been so calumniated, and his character is nevertheless so pure, so consistent, that it is right to devote at least one note to him. His conduct during the fifth and sixth of October was that of continual self-devotion, and yet it has been represented as criminal by men who owed their lives to it. The spirit of party, feeling the danger of allowing any virtues to a Constitutionalist, denied the services of La Fayette, and then commenced that long series of calumnies to which he has ever since been exposed."—*Thiers*, vol. i., p. 108.

231. Thiers, vol. i., p. 111.

232. "I saw her majesty in her cabinet an instant before her departure for Paris. She could scarcely speak. Tears poured down her face, to which all the blood in her body seemed to have mounted. She did me the favor to embrace me, and gave her hand to M. Campan to kiss, saying to us, Come immediately to take up your abode in Paris. We are utterly lost; dragged probably to death. Captive kings are always very near it."—*Madame Campan*, vol. ii., p. 84.

Chapter XVIII.
France Regenerated

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Kind Feelings of the People.—Emigration receives a new Impulse.—The National Assembly transferred to Paris.—The Constituent Assembly.—Assassination of François.—Anxiety of the Patriots.—Gloomy Winter.—Contrast between the Bishops and the laboring Clergy.—Church Funds seized by the Assembly.—The Church responsible for the Degradation of the People.—New Division of France.—The Right of Suffrage.—The Guillotine.—Rabaud de St. Etienne.

The royal family was now in Paris. The poor were, however, still perishing of famine. The night of the 6th of October passed without disturbance. It was dark even to blackness, and torrents of rain deluged the streets. Early in the morning of the 7th a vast multitude thronged the garden of the Tuileries, eager to catch a glimpse of the king. They all seemed animated by the kindest feelings toward their sovereign. The king, in response to reiterated calls, showed himself upon the balcony, and was received with universal acclamations. All the members of the royal family appeared to share in this popularity. Madame Elizabeth, sister of the king, a princess of rare loveliness both of person and character, caused her window to be opened, and sat partaking of refreshments in the presence of thousands of spectators. Men, women, and children, a vast multitude, gathered around the window, and words of kindness, love, and joy were on all lips

"We have now our king restored to us," they said. "He is taken away from his bad advisers, and will now be, as he has always wished to be, our good father."

This generous, confiding spirit had taken such full possession of the public mind—the people, notwithstanding the intolerable wrongs they had endured for so many ages, were so ready to forgive—that not a word of disrespect was uttered, even to the foreign body-guard of the king, or to the haughty lords and aristocratic ladies who had accompanied the court to

Paris. The people even cheered these nobles, against whom they had been so long contending, and addressed them in words of kindness.[233]

THE ROYAL FAMILY ABOUT TO EXHIBIT THEMSELVES TO THE PEOPLE.

The nobles were, however, so alarmed by this triumph of the people that emigration received a new impulse. One hundred and fifty of the Royalist deputies of the National Assembly immediately obtained passports and left the kingdom. Some of the nobles repaired to Turin. The Comte d'Artois (Charles X.) took up his residence with his father-in-law, the King of Sardinia. The emigrants, thus scattered through all the courts of Europe, were busy in endeavors to rally the aristocratic courts to crush popular liberty in France. The emigration throughout the country was so extensive that sixty thousand, it was said, went to Switzerland alone.

The king, on the contrary, appeared pleased with the affection of his people. He walked, without guards, through the crowds which thronged the

Elysian Fields, and was every where treated with respect. On the 9th of October, three days after his arrival in the city, he sent a letter to the Assembly at Versailles, informing that body that the testimonials of affection and fidelity which he had received from the city of Paris had determined him to fix his ordinary residence there.[234] He accordingly invited the Assembly to transfer its sitting to Paris. Incredible as it may seem, the imbecile king sent for his smith tools, put up his forge, and amused himself with file and hammer tinkering at locks.[235]

The Archbishop of Paris had fled with the emigrants. On the 19th of October the National Assembly left Versailles and held its first sitting in Paris, in a room of the archbishop's palace, from which room it soon removed to the riding-hall of the Tuileries, a much more commodious apartment which had been prepared for its accommodation.[236] As the great object of the Assembly was now to reorganize the government upon the basis of a free constitution, it dropped the name of National Assembly on leaving Versailles, and assumed in Paris the name of Constituent Assembly. Thus the same body in the course of five months was called by three different names. It was first the States-General, from the period of its meeting on the 5th of May until the union of the three orders on the 27th of June. It was then the National Assembly until its removal from Versailles to Paris, on the 19th of October. It then took the name of the Constituent Assembly, and continued in existence for nearly two years, until the 30th of September, 1791, when it expired, and a new body, the Legislative Assembly, commenced its session.

The storm of revolution for a time seemed to lull, and there were but few acts of violence. The people of Paris were still in a state of fearful suffering from famine, and on the 21st of October a few half-starved wretches seized a baker named François, whom they accused of holding back his bread, and in a moment of phrensy, before the police could interfere, strung him up at a lamp-post, and then cut off his head.

The deed was denounced by even the most violent of the revolutionists, and the Assembly took advantage of the feeling which the outrage excited to pass a martial law against tumultuous assemblies of the people. This law, which was almost a repetition of the English riot act, was assailed by many of the journals as a gross infringement of the rights of

the people. Robespierre in the Assembly and Marat in his wide-spread journal were conspicuous in denouncing it.

The atrocious murder of François, who was a generous and a charitable man, and entirely innocent of the crime of which he was accused, produced a profound impression. It was indicative of the rapid and fearful rise of mob violence. The king and queen sent to his young widow a letter of condolence, with a gift in money amounting to about twenty-five hundred dollars. The city government of Paris sent a committee of its members to visit and console her. La Fayette, mortified and indignant at the outrage, scoured the faubourgs in search of the miscreants who perpetrated the deed. Two of the ringleaders were arrested and handed over to immediate trial.

They were condemned to death, and the next morning were hanged in the same Place de Grêve which had been the scene of the outrage. This was the only murder, perpetrated by a Parisian mob, during the Revolution, which the law was sufficiently powerful to punish.[237]

ASSASSINATION OF FRANÇOIS THE BAKER.

In other parts of the kingdom there were occasional acts of violence. Bread was so enormously dear that the corn-dealers were accused of hoarding up immense stores for the sake of speculation. The ignorant mob in some instances seriously maltreated those suspected of this crime. The innocent were thus often punished, for the violence of the mob is as likely to fall upon the innocent as upon the guilty.

Many of the most intelligent friends of reform began now to fear that the nation was going "too fast and too far." The scenes of the 5th of October, and the omnipotence of the mob as evinced on that day, had inspired fearful apprehensions for the future. Even La Fayette felt that the salvation of the cause of liberty depended upon strengthening the power of the king. He induced the king to send the Duke of Orleans from Paris, and when the duke wished to return he sent him word that, the day after his return, he would have to fight a duel with him.

Mirabeau united with La Fayette in these endeavors to stop the nation in its headlong rush, and to secure constitutional liberty by giving strength to the monarchical arm. They were both of the opinion that France, surrounded by powerful and jealous monarchies, and with millions of peasants unaccustomed to self-government, who could neither read nor write, and who were almost as uninstructed as the sheep they tended, needed a throne founded upon a free constitution.[238] Even in the Assembly Mirabeau ventured to urge *that it was necessary to restore strength to the executive power*.[239] But the court hated both La Fayette and Mirabeau, and were opposed to any diminution of their own exclusive privileges. They would accept of no compromise, and all the efforts of the moderate party were unavailing.

Gloomy winter now commenced, and there was no money, no labor, no bread. The aristocratic party all over the realm were packing their trunks, and sending before them across the frontiers whatever funds they could collect. They wished to render France as weak and miserable as possible, that the people might be more easily again subjugated to the feudal yoke by the armies of foreign despots. Hence there was a frightful increase of beggary. In Paris alone there were two hundred thousand. It is one of the greatest of marvels that such a mass of men, literally starving, could have remained so quiet. The resources of the kingdom were exhausted during

the winter in feeding, in all the towns of France, paupers amounting to millions. All eyes were now directed to the National Assembly for measures of relief.

FIRES IN THE STREETS FOR THE POOR.

The wealth of the clergy was enormous. Almsgiving, which has filled Europe with beggary, has ever been represented by the Catholic Church as the first act of piety. During long ages of superstition, the dying had been induced, as an atonement for godless lives, to bequeath their possessions to the Church, to be dispensed in charity to the people. Thus many a wealthy sinner had obtained absolution, and thus the ecclesiastics held endowments which comprised one fifth of the lands of the kingdom, and were estimated at four thousand millions of francs ($800,000,000).[240]

Notwithstanding this immense opulence of the Church, nearly all the parish pastors, the hard and faithful workers for Christianity—and there were many such, men of true lives and of unfeigned religion—were in the extreme of poverty. The bishops were all *nobles*, for even Louis XVI. would elect no other. These bishops were often the most dissolute and voluptuous of men, and reveled in incomes of a million of francs ($250,000) a year. The working clergy, on the contrary, who were from the people, seldom received more than two hundred francs ($40) a year. They

were so poor as to be quite dependent upon their parishioners for charity.[241]

The Assembly assumed that these treasures had been intrusted to the Church for the benefit of the people; that the luxurious ecclesiastics, by unfaithfulness to their trust, had forfeited the right of farther dispensing the charity. After a very fierce strife, a motion was made by Mirabeau, that the possessions of the Church were *at the disposal* of the state. Many of the lower clergy voted for the resolution, and it was adopted by a majority of 568 against 346. Forty deputies refused to vote. This measure placed at once immense resources in the hands of the Assembly, and necessarily exasperated tenfold the privileged classes, and rolled a wave of alarm over the whole wide-spread domain of the Pope. It was the signal for Catholic Europe to rise in arms against the Revolution. As it was impossible, under the pressure of the times, to force the sale of the enormous property of the Church without an immense sacrifice, bonds were issued, called *assignats*, assigned or secured on this church property.

Thus was the haughty Gallican Church deprived of its ill-gotten and worse used wealth. The dignitaries of this Church had ever been the most inveterate foes of popular elevation. Treasure which had been wrested from the poor and extorted from the dying, as a gift to God for the promotion of human virtue, they were using to forge chains for the people, and were squandering in shameless profligacy.

Nearly all the nobles were infidels, disciples of Voltaire. For years, while reveling in wine and debauchery, they had held up religion to contempt. But they now suddenly became very devout, espoused the cause of their boon companions, the bishops, and remonstrated against laying unholy hands upon the treasury of the Lord. All over Europe the two most formidable forces, secular and religious aristocracy, were now combined against popular reform. It was this principle which led the Protestant English noble and the papal Austrian bishop to make common cause against the regeneration of France.

There were some French nobles and French bishops who recognized, whatever may have been their motives, the rights of the people, and espoused their side. Talleyrand, the Bishop of Autun, introduced the measure, and Mirabeau supported it with all the energy of his eloquence.

The degradation of the people is the condemnation of the papal Church. For many centuries the office of elevating the people had devolved upon the clergy. Instead of instructing their congregations, the forms of worship had been converted into a senseless pantomime; the prayers were offered in an unknown tongue; the word of God was excluded from their sight. The rich became infidels and atheists, and by robbing the poor luxuriated in profligacy. The poor became brutalized and savage, and were held under restraint only by the terrors of a soul-hardening superstition.

There is no hope of peace for the world but in that doctrine of Christ which promotes the brotherhood of man. Where this fraternity is recognized and its sympathies circulate, there is peace. The aristocratic Church in France had been the tool of the court in degrading and enslaving the people. The awful day of retribution was but the inevitable progress of the divine law. Man, crushed and trampled upon by his brother man, may endure it for an age, for a century, but the time will come when he will endure it no longer, and the ferocity of his rising will be proportionate to the depth and the gloom of the dungeon in which he has been immured.[242] The progress of the world is toward justice, equality, and nature. If that progress be not peaceful it will be violent and bloody. The vital energies of the soul of man can not forever be repressed.

France had for some time been divided into thirteen large provinces, incorporated at different periods and possessing different immunities and a diversity of customs and laws. The Assembly broke down all these old barriers that a character of unity might be given to the nation. The kingdom was divided into eighty-three departments, each department being about fifty-four miles square. These departments were divided into districts, and the districts into communes. This division somewhat resembled that of the United States, into states, counties, and towns.

The right of suffrage was extended to all male citizens twenty-five years of age, who had resided in the electoral district one year, who had paid a direct tax amounting to the value of three days' labor, about sixty cents, who were not in the condition of servants, and who were enrolled in the National Guard. These were called *active* citizens. The rest of the population were deemed *passive* citizens. To be eligible to *office* either as

a magistrate or a representative, it was required that one should pay a direct tax of about ten dollars, and also be a landholder. The aristocrats considered this extension of the right of suffrage as awfully radical and democratic. On the other hand the democracy, from its lower depths, exclaimed with the utmost vehemence and indignation against the restriction of the right of suffrage and of office to tax-payers and property-holders.

"There is but one united voice," cried Camille Desmoulins, "in the city and in the country, against this ten-dollar decree (*le décret du marc d'argent*). It is constituting in France an aristocratic government, and it is the most signal victory which the aristocrats have yet gained in the Assembly. To demonstrate the absurdity of the decree it is necessary but to mention that Rousseau, Corneille, Mably, under it could not have been eligible. As for you, ye despicable priests, ye lying cheating knaves, do you see that you make even your God ineligible?[243] Jesus Christ, whom you recognize as divine, you thrust out into the ranks of the mob. And do you wish that I should respect you, ye priests of an ignominious God (*d'un Dieu proletaire*), who is not even an active citizen? Respect that poverty which Jesus Christ has ennobled."[244]

Such fierce appeals produced a profound and exasperating impression upon the army of two hundred thousand beggars in Paris and upon the millions utterly impoverished in France. "We have overthrown the aristocracy of birth," the orators of the populace exclaimed, "only to introduce the still more hateful aristocracy of the purse." The working clergy, who were among the foremost in favor of reform, were almost to a man efficient members of the moderate party, and cordially co-operated with La Fayette in the endeavor to prevent liberty from being whelmed in lawlessness. The clergy had great influence, and hence the venom of the popular speakers and writers was perseveringly directed against them.[245]

The Assembly then abolished the oppressive duty upon salt.[246] The old parliaments of the old provinces, as corrupt bodies as have perhaps ever existed, and the subservient instruments of aristocratic oppression, were suppressed, and new courts of a popular character substituted in their place. All trials were ordered to be public; no punishment, on accusation for crime, could be inflicted unless by a vote of two thirds of the court.

The penalty of death required a vote of four fifths. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes was blotted out, and thus some thousands of Protestants who had long been banished from France were permitted to return and to enjoy all their political rights. It was decreed that all citizens, of whatever condition, should be subject to the same laws and judged by the same tribunals. Those accused of crime were to be tried by jury, but not till a court had previously determined that the evidence against them was sufficiently strong to warrant their arrest. It is remarkable that both Robespierre and Marat were most earnest in their endeavors to abrogate the death-penalty. During this discussion Dr. Guillotin urged the adoption, in capital punishment, of a new machine which he had invented.

"With my machine," said the doctor, "I can clip off your head in the twinkling of an eye without your feeling it."

These words, most earnestly uttered, caused a general burst of laughter in the Assembly. But a few months passed ere many of those deputies were bound to the plank and experienced the efficiency of the keen blade. The introduction of the guillotine was intended as a measure of humanity. The unfortunate man doomed to death was thus to be saved from needless suffering.[247]

The measures adopted by the Constituent Assembly seem to republican eyes just and moderate. Experience, it is true, has proved that it is safer to have two houses of legislation, a senate and a lower house, than one, but the subsequent decrees passed by this one house were manifestly dictated, not by passion, but by patriotism and a sense of right.[248]

The clergy now made immense efforts to rouse the peasantry all over the kingdom to oppose the Revolution. Religious fanaticism exhausted all its energies. The parliaments also of the old provinces, composed exclusively of the nobles, roused themselves anew and were vehement in remonstrances and protests. They became active agents in organizing opposition, in maligning the action of the Assembly, and in inciting the credulous multitude to violence. The Assembly punished the parliaments by abolishing them all.

The court bitterly accused the Assembly of a usurpation of power, which called from Mirabeau a reply which electrified France.

"You ask," he said, "how, from being deputies, we have made ourselves a convention. I will tell you. The day when, finding our assembly-room shut, bristling and defiled with bayonets, we hastened to the first place that could contain us, and swore that we would perish rather than abandon the interests of the people—on that day, if we were not a convention, we became one. Let them now go and hunt out of the useless nomenclature of civilians the definition of the words National Convention! Gentlemen, you all know the conduct of that Roman who, to save his country from a great conspiracy, had been obliged to outstep the powers conferred upon him by the laws. A captious tribune required from him the oath that he had respected them. He thought, by that insidious proposal, to leave the consul no alternative but perjury or an embarrassing avowal. 'I swear,' said that great man, 'that I have saved the republic.' Gentlemen, we also swear that we have saved the commonwealth."

This sublime apostrophe brought the whole Assembly to its feet. The charge of usurpation was not repeated.

A great effort was at the same time made to compel the Assembly to adopt the resolution that the "Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion is, and shall ever be, the religion of the nation, and that its worship is the only one authorized." As one of the court party was urging this resolve, and quoting, as a precedent, some intolerant decree of Louis XIV., Mirabeau sent dismay to the heart of the court by exclaiming,

> "And how should not every kind of intolerance have been consecrated in a reign signalized by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes?"

Then, pointing to a window of the Louvre, he continued, in deep and solemn tones which thrilled through every heart,

> "Do you appeal to history? Forget not that from this very hall I behold the window whence a king of France, armed against his people by an execrable faction that disguised personal interest under the cloak of religion, fired his musket and gave the signal for the massacre of St. Bartholomew!"

The effect was electric, and the spirit of intolerance was crushed.

The true Christian charity which the Assembly assumed was cordially accepted by the mass of the nation. We love to record the fact that the great majority of the Catholic population were delighted to see the Protestants restored to their civil and religious rights. Even Michelet, hostile as he is to all revealed religion, testifies: "The unanimity was affecting, and one of the sights the most worthy to call down the blessing of God upon earth. In many parts the Catholics went to the temple of the Protestants, and united with them to return thanks to Providence together. On the other hand the Protestants attended at the Catholic *Te Deum*. Far above all the altars, every temple and every church, a divine ray had appeared in heaven."[249] In every place where the Protestants were in the majority they presented the most affecting spectacle of fraternity.

A Protestant, M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, was chosen president of the Assembly—a position at that time higher than that of the throne. He was the son of the celebrated Protestant martyr of Cevennes, who for long years had been hunted like a wild beast, as he hid in dens in the forest, escaping from the ferocity of religious persecution. The venerable parent was still living, and received from his son a letter containing the declaration, "The president of the National Assembly is at your feet."

The higher ecclesiastics were, however, exasperated by this triumph of religious liberty. They succeeded, in Montauban and in Nimes, in exciting a Roman Catholic mob against the Protestants. The ignorant populace, roused by superstition, seized their arms, shouted "Down with the nation!" and fell with the most cruel butchery upon the Protestants. The violent insurrection was, however, soon quelled, and without any acts of retaliatory vengeance.[250] The bishops anathematized every priest friendly to the Revolution, and designated all such to the hatred and contempt of the fanatic populace. The bishop who, under the old régime, had enjoyed an income of eight hundred thousand francs ($160,000), and was rejoicing in his palaces, horses, and concubines, invoked the wrath of God upon the curate who was now receiving twelve hundred francs ($240) from the nation. The power of the papal ecclesiastics was so strong that most of the humble curates were eventually compelled to abandon the Revolution and rally again around the sceptre of the Pope.

The air was still filled with rumors of plots to disperse the Assembly and carry the king off to the protection of the royalist army at Metz, where he could be forced by the nobles to sanction their course, in invading France with foreign armies. On the 25th of December the Marquis of Favrus was arrested, accused of forming a plot to seize the king with an army of thirty thousand men, and to assassinate La Fayette and Bailly. It was said that twelve hundred horse were ready at Versailles to carry off the king, and that a powerful force, composed of Swiss and Piedmontese, was organized to march upon Paris. The king's brother, the Count of Provence, subsequently Louis XVIII., was reported as in the plot, and to have supplied the conspirators with large sums of money. Louis was willing to be abducted as if by violence, but was not willing to assume any responsibility by engaging in measures for escape. He assumed the attitude of contentment, and with such apparent cordiality professed co-operation in the measures of the Assembly for the regeneration of France that many supposed that he had honestly espoused the popular cause.

FOOTNOTES:

233. For overwhelming evidence that such was the state of the public mind, see Weber, vol. i., p. 257; Beaulieu, vol. ii., p. 203; Amis de la Liberté, vol. iv., p. 2-6; Michelet, vol. i., p. 284.

234. Weber, an eye-witness of the king's reception in Paris, though a zealous Royalist, testifies that the reception was most kind and affectionate on the part of the masses of the people. See Weber, vol. ii., p. 228. See also Arthur Young, vol. i., p. 264-280.

235. Le Chateau des Tuileries, par Roussel, in Hist. Parl., vol. iv., p. 195.

236. That hall has since been destroyed. It stood upon the place now occupied by the houses No. 36 and 38 Rue de Rivoli.

237. Even the most zealous of the revolutionary journals denounced with unmeasured severity the murder of François. Loustalot exclaimed, "Des Français! des Français! non, non de tels monstres n'appartiennent à aucun pays; le crime est leur element, le gibet leur patrie."

238. On the 15th of March, M. de Lamarck took to Mirabeau the overtures of the court, but found him very cool. When pressed by Lamarck, he said that the throne could only be restored by establishing it upon a basis of liberty; that, if the court wanted any thing else, he would oppose instead of serving it.—*Michelet*, p. 328.

239. In attestation of the correctness of these remarks, see the statements of Mirabeau, La Fayette, and Alexander de Lameth.

240. Michelet, vol. i., p. 290.

241. In the army there was the same inequality. According to the budget for war in 1784, the officers received forty-six millions of francs, and the whole body of soldiers but forty-four. "It is true," says Michelet, "that, under Louis XVI., another pay was added, settled with the cudgel. This was to imitate the famous discipline of Prussia, and was supposed to contain the whole secret of the victories of Frederick the Great: man driven like a machine, and punished like a child." The soldiers under the Empire knew how to appreciate the change.

242. "Every body was acquainted with the morals of the prelates and the ignorance of the inferior clergy. The curates possessed some virtues but no information. Wherever they ruled they were an obstacle to every improvement of the people, and caused them to retrograde. To quote but one example, Poitou, civilized in the sixteenth century, became barbarous under their influence; they were preparing for us the civil war of Vendée."—*Michelet*, p. 222.

243. Some curious facts were elicited during the progress of this discussion respecting the manner in which a portion of the vast revenues of the Church had been obtained. The clergy of Condom promised the simple, kind-hearted peasants, in consideration for a large quantity of grain, that they would every year conduct two hundred and fifty souls from purgatory directly to Paradise. In some places a regular tariff of prices had been established for the pardon of crimes. Absolution for incest could be purchased for one dollar, arson required one dollar and a quarter, parricide one dollar, and absolution could be obtained for all sins united for about sixteen dollars. These prices seem very moderate. But it must be remembered that the peasants were *excessively* poor, and could not, even to escape from purgatory, pay large sums.—*Villiaumé*, p. 52.

244. Histoire des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros, p. 25.

245. In the Faubourg St. Antoine, which contained a population of thirty thousand, it is said that there were but two hundred *active citizens*. Marat, in his addresses to the "unfortunate citizens of the faubourgs," urged them to vote, notwithstanding the decree of the Assembly. "No power under the sun," said he, "can deprive you of the right of suffrage, which is inherent in society itself."

246. The price of salt immediately fell from fourteen sous a pound to less than one sou.—*Villiaumé*.

247. It was not until the month of March, 1792, that the guillotine was first used,

248. "The government of the Revolution was rapidly becoming established. The Assembly had given to the new régime its monarch, its national representation, its territorial division, its armed force, its municipal and administrative power, its popular tribunals, its currency, its clergy; it had made an arrangement with respect to its debt, and had found means to reconstruct property without injustice."—*Miguet*, p. 87.

249. Michelet's French Revolution, p. 358.

250. "What was the National Assembly doing at this time in Paris? Its more than Christian meekness is a surprising spectacle."—*Michelet*, p. 365.

Chapter XIX.
The King Accepts the Constitution

Table of Contents

> The King visits the Assembly.—His Speech.—The Priests rouse the Populace.—The King's Salary.—Petition of Talma.—Views of Napoleon.—Condemnation and Execution of the Marquis of Favrus.—Spirit of the New Constitution.—National Jubilee.—The Queen sympathizes with the Popular Movement.—Writings of Edmund Burke.

On the 4th of February the king, without any previous announcement, to the surprise of all, entered the hall of the Assembly. A burst of welcome greeted his entrance. The tidings of this movement spread with electric speed through Paris, and thousands of spectators speedily filled all parts of the hall to listen to the king's speech. The king stood upon the platform, and addressed the Assembly with words of dignity and eloquence which seemed above his nature. There was such an air of sincerity pervading every sentence that no one could doubt that he was giving utterance to his real opinions. This remarkable speech contained the following expressions:[251]

> "Gentlemen, the critical circumstances in which France is placed bring me among you. A grand goal is presented to your view, but it is requisite that it be attained without any increase of agitation, and without any new convulsions. It was, I must say, in a more agreeable and a more quiet manner that I had hoped to lead you to it, when I formed the design of assembling you, and of bringing together for the public welfare the talents and the opinions of the representatives of the nation; but my happiness and my glory are not the less connected with the success of your labors.

"I think that the time is come when it is of importance to the interests of the state that I should associate myself, in a more express and manifest manner, in the execution and success of all that you have planned for the benefit of France. I can not seize a more signal occasion than when you submit to my acceptance decrees destined to establish a new organization in the kingdom, which must have so important and so propitious an influence on the happiness of my subjects and on the prosperity of this empire.

"You know, gentlemen, it is more than ten years ago, at a time when the wishes of the nation relative to provincial assemblies had not yet been expressed, I began to substitute that kind of administration for the one which ancient and long habit had sanctioned. You have improved upon these views in several ways, and the most essential, no doubt, is that equal and wisely-calculated subdivision which, by breaking down the ancient partitions between province and province, and establishing a general and complete system of equilibrium, more intimately unites all parts of the kingdom in one and the same spirit, in one and the same interest. This grand idea, this salutary design, is all your own. I will promote, I will second, by all the means in my power, the success of that vast organization on which depends the welfare of France.

"Let it be known every where that the monarch and the representatives of the nation are united in the same interest, in the same wish. Some day, I fondly believe, every Frenchman, without exception, will acknowledge the benefit of the total suppression of the differences of order and condition. No doubt those who have relinquished their pecuniary privileges —those who will no longer form, as of old, an order in the state, find themselves subjected to sacrifices, the importance of which I fully appreciate; but I am persuaded that they will have generosity enough to seek an indemnification in all the

> public advantages of which the establishment of national assemblies holds out a hope.
>
> "I will defend, therefore, I will uphold constitutional liberty, the principles of which the public wish, in accordance with mine, has sanctioned. I will do more, and, in concert with the queen, who shares all my sentiments, I will early adapt the mind and heart of my son to the new order of things which circumstances have brought about. I will accustom him from his very first years to seek happiness in the happiness of the French, and ever to acknowledge that, in spite of the language of flatterers, a wise constitution will preserve him from the dangers of inexperience, and that a just liberty adds a new value to the sentiments of affection and loyalty of which the nation has, for so many ages, given such touching proofs to its kings."

These noble words, which were uttered with as much sincerity as a weak and vacillating mind was capable of cherishing, were received with the most enthusiastic expressions of pleasure and gratitude. Thunders of applause filled the house, in which the galleries tumultuously joined. All past jealousies seemed forgotten forever, and the queen and the dauphin shared in the transporting acclaim. The multitude, with shouts of applause, conducted the king back to the Tuileries, while the Assembly voted thanks to him and to the queen.

The king had thus publicly accepted the Constitution even before it was completed, and promised to support it. Each deputy took the oath to uphold the "Constitution decreed by the National Assembly and accepted by the king." The example was contagious, and the oath was repeated, with festivities and illuminations, in every district of Paris, and through all the cities and villages of France.

Thus far the reforms adopted had been, on the whole, most eminently wise, and such as the welfare of the nation imperiously demanded. Had the privileged classes acceded, as they ought to have done, to these measures of justice, and contributed their influence in favor of law and order, all might have been well, and the Iliad of woes which succeeded might never

have been known. But the nobles and the higher clergy did every thing in their power to stimulate the mob to violence, to fill France with lawlessness and blood, that they might more effectually appeal to religious fanaticism at home and to despotism abroad to forge chains and rivet them anew upon the enfranchised people.

Every effort was now made to combine the clergy against the Revolution—to rouse the ignorant and superstitious masses with the cry that religion was in danger, and to march the armies of surrounding monarchies in a war of invasion upon France. The nobles of the Church and the State were responsible for that terrific outburst of the mob, which might easily have been repressed if they would have united with the true patriots in favor of liberty and of law.[252]

In many of the rural districts the priests roused the fanatic populace to forcible resistance. Many of the priests had been in a condition of almost compulsory subservience to the higher clergy. Trained to *obedience* as the primal law of the Church, they combined their efforts with those of the exasperated nobility, and thus, in several of the remote sections of France, mobs were instigated against the Revolution. Here commenced the conflict between the people and the clergy. Pure democracy and true Christianity meet and embrace. They have but one spirit—fraternity, charity. Despotism and ecclesiasticism are also natural congenial allies. The pope and the king, the cardinal and the duke, all over Europe became accomplices.

The Assembly, with much delicacy, invited the king himself to fix the income necessary for the suitable support of the crown. He fixed it at twenty-five millions of francs ($5,000,000). This enormous salary, two hundred times as much as the President of the United States receives, was instantly voted by acclamation. There were but four votes in opposition. Nothing can more conclusively show than this the kindly feelings of the people toward the monarch, and the *then* desire merely to ingraft the institutions of liberty upon the monarchy.

The Revolution had humanely extended its helping hand to all the debased and defrauded classes, to the Protestants, the Jews, the negroes, the slaves, the play-actors. The relentless proscription of play-actors is one of the most remarkable of the contradictions and outrages of the old

régime. They were doubtless a very worthless set of men and women; but that the Church should have refused them either marriage or burial is indeed extraordinary. "Oh, barbarous prejudices!" exclaimed Michelet. "The two first men of England and France, the author of *Othello* and of *Tartufe*, were they not comedians?"

Notwithstanding the general decree of democratic enfranchisement pronounced by the Assembly, the world-renowned Talma, having applied to the Church for the rite of marriage, which the Church alone could solemnize, met with a peremptory refusal. He sent the following characteristic petition to the National Assembly:

> "I implore the succor of the constitutional law, and claim the rights of a citizen, from which rights the Constitution does not exclude me because I am a member of the theatrical profession. I have chosen a companion to whom I wish to be united by the ties of marriage. My father has given his consent. I have called upon the curé of St. Sulpice for the publication of the banns. After a first refusal I have served upon him a judicial summons. He replies to the sheriff that he has referred the matter to his ecclesiastical superiors, and is instructed by them that the Church refuses to perform the rites of marriage for a play-actor unless he first renounces that profession. I can, it is true, renounce my profession, be married, and resume my profession again the next day. But I do not wish to show myself unworthy of that religion which they invoke against me, and unworthy of the Constitution in thus accusing your decrees of error and your laws of powerlessness."[253]

It was in such ways as these that the Romish Church began to throw every possible obstacle in the way of liberty, and to exasperate the people, rejoicing in their new enfranchisement.

It was a long stride which Napoleon took when he subsequently conferred the Cross of the Legion of Honor upon an illustrious tragedian. "My object," says Napoleon, "was to destroy the whole of the feudal system as organized by Charlemagne. I sought for true merit among all

ranks of the great mass of French people, and was anxious to organize a true and general system of equality. I was desirous that every Frenchman should be admissible to all the employments and dignities of the state, provided he was possessed of talents and character equal to the performance of the duties, whatever might be his family. In a word, I was eager to abolish to the last trace the privileges of the ancient nobility, and to establish a government which, at the same time that it held the reins of government with a firm hand, should still be a *popular government*. The oligarchs of every country in Europe soon perceived my design, and it was for this reason that war to the death was carried on against me by England. The noble families of London, as well as those of Vienna, think themselves prescriptively entitled to the occupation of all the important offices in the state. Their birth is regarded by them as a substitute for talents and capacities."

Soon after Napoleon's attainment of the consulship he restored to France the Christian religion, which revolutionary fury had swept away. In consistency with his unvarying principles, he established perfect freedom of opinion and of worship. Some of the reinstated priests began to assume much of their former arrogance. A celebrated actress died in Paris. A priest, adopting the intolerance of the old régime, refused her remains Christian burial. Napoleon caused the following article to be inserted the next day in the Moniteur, expressive of his emphatic denunciation:

> "The curate of St. Roche, in a moment of hallucination, has refused the rites of burial to Mademoiselle Cameroi. One of his colleagues, a man of sense, received the procession into the church of St. Thomas, where the burial service was performed with the usual solemnities. The Archbishop of Paris has suspended the curate of St. Roche for three months, to give him time to recollect that Jesus Christ commanded us to pray even for our enemies. Being thus called by meditation to a proper sense of his duties, he may learn that all these superstitious observances, the offspring of an age of credulity or of crazed imaginations, tend only to the discredit of true religion, and have been proscribed by the recent Concordat of the French Church."

The trial of Marquis Favrus was continued. On the 18th of February he was adjudged guilty of plotting the crime of assassinating Bailly and La Fayette, of seizing and abducting the king, and of exciting insurrection and civil war. He was sentenced to be taken by the executioner to the principal door of the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame, in a tumbrel, barefooted, bareheaded, and dressed simply in his night-robe, with a rope round his neck, a blazing torch in his hands, and with a label on his breast and back inscribed with the words "Conspirator against the State." After having on his knees asked pardon of God, the nation, the king, and justice, he was to read aloud his own death-warrant, and then to be taken to the Place de Grève and hanged. This cruel sentence was immediately executed, the court, conscious of its powerlessness, making no attempts to save him.

This was the first time that a nobleman had been hanged, and the mob, deeming him an infamous conspirator against the rights of the people, rejoiced in his execution. They witnessed with delight this indication that the reign of *equality* had really commenced; that the sword of retribution would hereafter fall as surely upon the head of the *high-born* as upon that of the *low-born* offender.

It was now nearly a year since the fall of the Bastille, and France, even in the midst of famine, and almost starvation, had passed from the reign of the most execrable despotism to the reign of constitutional liberty. Never before had so vast a revolution been effected so peaceably. The enslaved people had broken and thrown away their fetters, and were enfranchised. Instead of falling upon their past oppressors in indiscriminate massacre, they had spared them, wresting from them only the exclusive privileges of tyranny. The Assembly sought only constitutional liberty and peace with all the world. The decrees enacted by the Constituent Assembly were essentially the same with those adopted by republican America.

THE MARQUIS OF FAVRUS READING HIS DEATH-WARRANT.

Free principles had been infused into the government; *lettres de cachet*, the most infamous instruments of oppression the world has ever known, abolished; feudal impediments and oppressions of every kind removed; the right of suffrage established and made almost universal; the offices of honor and emolument in the state thrown open to merit, with but the slightest limitations; religious liberty proclaimed, the Protestant, the Jew, the negro, and the play-actor enfranchised; law made uniform, criminal jurisprudence reformed, monasteries, those haunts of indolence and vice, abolished, and the military force of the country intrusted to the citizens of the country. Such a transformation from the slavery, corruption, and horror of the old régime was translation from the dungeon to the blaze of day. All this was done almost without violence. The court here and there shot down a few hundred, some chateaux were burned, and there were a

few acts of mob violence; but that a nation of twenty millions of people should have been able to accomplish so vast a change so bloodlessly must ever be a marvel.

But the armies of aristocratic opposition were gathering to crush this liberty, which threatened to spread to other states. Despotic Europe combined, and with all her accumulated armies fell upon the people of France. The recently emancipated people fought to protect themselves from new chains with all the blind fury and ferocity of despair. Then ensued scenes of blood and woes which appalled the world.[254]

The French people, unconscious of the terrific storm which was gathering, prepared for a great national jubilee. It was to be held on the 14th of July, the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille. All France was to be represented at the festival. The Field of Mars, a vast parade-ground in Paris, a mile in length and half a mile in width, extending from the military school to the banks of the Seine, was the selected theatre for this national festivity. The centre was made smooth as a floor, and the removed earth was placed on the sides so as to create slopes in the form of an amphitheatre capable of accommodating nearly half a million of spectators. But so immense was the work to be performed, that at length apprehensions were felt that the field could not be in readiness in season for the appointed fête. No sooner was this idea suggested than all Paris, in a flame of enthusiasm, volunteered to aid in the toil.

A more extraordinary scene of enthusiasm earth has never witnessed. All heads and hearts were electrified. Men, women, and children, of all ages and ranks, spread over the field and shared in the toil. The Carthusian monk and the skeptical philosopher, the hooded nun and the brawny fish-woman, merchants, lawyers, students, scholars, gray-haired patriots, and impetuous boys, matrons and maidens, delicate ladies and the rugged daughters of toil, blended harmoniously together in immense groups, ever varied, incessantly moving, yet guided by engineers with almost military order and precision. Moving tents and portable restaurants, decorated with tricolored ribbons, added to the gayety of the spectacle. Trumpets sounded the charge against banks of earth, and willing hands wielded energetically all the potent enginery of wheel-barrows, hoes, and spades. Bands of music animated and enlivened the scene, blended with shouts of joy and

songs of fraternal sympathy. Three hundred thousand persons were thus seen at once laboring upon this spacious arena to rear an altar for the great sacrament of French liberty. It was a work of love. The long twilight allowed them to labor until the clock struck nine. Then the groups separated. Each individual repaired to the station of his section, and marched in procession, accompanied by triumphal music and with the illumination of torches, to his home. Even the Marquis of Ferrières, inveterate Royalist as he was, can not withhold his tribute of admiration in view of this astonishing drama. "The mind felt sinking," says he, "under the weight of a delicious intoxication at the sight of a whole people who had descended again to the sweet sentiments of a primitive fraternity."

PREPARATION FOR THE FESTIVAL ON THE FIELD OF MARS.

The field was thus prepared, and the long-expected day arrived. Numerous delegates from all the eighty-three departments of France had come up to Paris to share in the celebration of the nation's enfranchisement. The morning of the 14th dawned dark and stormy. Heavy clouds curtained the sky and the rain fell in torrents. Regardless of the

unpropitious weather, at an early hour four hundred thousand spectators had taken their seats in the vast amphitheatre three miles in circuit.

The delegates, twenty thousand in number, ranged beneath eighty-three banners, emblematic of the departments of France, formed in line on the site of the demolished Bastille, and, with a very magnificent array of troops of the line, sailors of the royal navy, and the National Guard, marched through the thronged and garlanded streets of St. Martin, St. Denis, and St. Honoré, and by the *Cours la Reine* to a bridge of boats constructed across the river. All the way they were greeted with acclamations, and the ladies regaled them sumptuously by letting down in baskets from the windows wine, ham, and fruits. The country members shouted "Long live our Parisian brothers!" and the Parisians responded with accordant greetings and with exuberant hospitality and loving-kindness.

To the patriot La Fayette this was an hour of inexpressible triumph. As he rode along the lines on a noble charger he was every where greeted with shouts of heartfelt affection. A man whom nobody knew pressed through the crowd, and, approaching the general, with a bottle in one hand and a glass in the other, said,

"General, you are hot. Take a glass."

Raising the bottle he filled the tumbler and presented it to La Fayette. The marquis took the glass, fixed his eye for a moment upon the stranger, and drank the wine at a draught. This confidence of La Fayette in the multitude gave rise to a burst of applause.[255]

Just as the procession had entered the field, and the shouts of the congregated thousands were ringing through the air, the rain ceased to fall, the clouds broke, and the sun came out in glorious brilliance. The spectacle now assumed an aspect of unparalleled sublimity. Near the centre of the field there was constructed an immense altar of imposing and antique architecture, upon whose spacious platform, twenty-five feet high, three hundred priests were assembled, in white surplices and broad tricolored sashes. Near this altar a majestic throne was reared, where the king sat, the acknowledged sovereign of France, attended by the queen, the court, and all the deputies of that Constituent Assembly which had conferred the inestimable boon of a free constitution upon France.

An awning, decorated with golden *fleurs de lis*, embellished and protected the throne. Fifty thousand of the National Guard, in new and brilliant uniform, with waving banners, martial bands, glittering arms, and richly-caparisoned horses, filled the spaces around the altar and the throne. Then four hundred thousand spectators crowded the ascending seats which, in thirty concentric rows, encircled this vast inclosure. Every house-top and steeple in the vicinity swarmed with the rejoicing multitude; and even the distant heights of Montmartre, St. Cloud, Meudon, and Sevres, seemed alive with the masses assembled to witness the magnificent spectacle. Tear-drops from the passing storm, pendent from the leaves, and trembling on every blade of grass, glittered in the sun, as if betokening that the day of darkness and sorrow had passed, and that light had dawned, in which tears were to be dried from every eye.

All hearts thrilled with emotion. Mass was performed, and the oriflamme, the national banner of France, and the banners of the eighty-three departments, were blessed by Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun. Gratitude to God was then expressed in the majestic *Te Deum*, chanted by twelve hundred musicians. A peal of thunder from the assembled cannon uttered the national Amen to these solemn services.

La Fayette, as the representative of the military forces of the kingdom, both by land and sea, now ascended the altar, and, in the presence of more than half a million of spectators, in behalf of the army and of the navy, took the oath of allegiance. Breathless silence pervaded the assembly, and every eye was riveted upon this patriot of two continents, while he uttered the solemn words,

> "We swear eternal fidelity to the nation, the law, and the king; to maintain, to the utmost of our power, the Constitution decreed by the National Assembly and accepted by the king, and to remain united with every Frenchman by the indissoluble ties of fraternity."

When he closed, every banner waved, every sabre gleamed, and sixty thousand voices shouted, as with thunder peal, "We swear it!"

The president of the National Assembly then repeated the oath, and all the deputies and the four hundred thousand spectators responded, "We

swear it."

The king then rose in front of his throne. In a loud, distinct voice, which seemed to vibrate through the still air to the remotest part of the vast and thronged amphitheatre, he repeated the solemn oath,

> "I, King of the French, swear to the nation to employ all the powers delegated to me by the constitutional law of the state in maintaining the Constitution decreed by the National Assembly and accepted by me."

GRAND CELEBRATION ON THE FIELD OF MARS.

A more sublime moment never occurred in a nation's history. Every heart throbbed, and thousands of eyes were dimmed with tears. Even the queen was roused by the enthusiasm of the scene. Inspired by the impulse

which glowed in every bosom, she rose, stepped forward into the presence of the people, and, raising her beautiful boy, the little dauphin, in her arms, said, in a loud voice,

"See my son! he joins, as well as myself, in the same oath."

Every eye beheld the act, and the words she uttered were repeated with electric speed along the lines. Enthusiasm burst all bounds. The spectators rose from their seats, and the air was filled with the roar of five hundred thousand voices, as every man, woman, and child shouted, "Vive le Roi! Vive la Reine! Vive le Dauphin!" The crowds on Montmartre, St. Cloud, Sevres, and Meudon caught the shout, and re-echoed it in tumultuous reverberations. And then came another peal still louder, as battery after battery of artillery, on the field, on the bridges, in the streets, and on the heights, simultaneously mingled their majestic voices with the clash of martial bands and the acclaim of regenerated France.

God seemed to smile upon this jubilee of his enfranchised children. The clouds had all disappeared. The sun shone brilliantly, and the Majesty of heaven apparently condescended to take a prominent part in the ceremonies of the eventful day. In conclusion, the *Te Deum* was again chanted by the vast choir, and the deep-voiced cannon proclaimed "Peace to the nation and praise to the Lord."

At the same hour all France, assembled in the eighty-three departments, took the same oath of fidelity to the nation, the law, and the king. Discord seemed to have passed away. No murmurs were heard. No man raised a voice of opposition. The general tide of rejoicing swept resistlessly over the land. From mountain to mountain the roar of cannon transmitted the tidings, from valley to valley chimes from the church bells caught and re-echoed the joyful sound, and from central Paris to the ocean, to the Rhine, to the Alps, and to the Pyrenees, twenty-four millions of people in one hour raised the shout of emancipation. Such a shout never before or since has ascended from earth to the ear of God.

For a week these rejoicings were continued in Paris. The Field of Mars was converted into an immense ball-room, where thousands listened to enchanting music, and with the overflowings of fraternal love engaged in feasting, dancing, and all manner of games. At night the city blazed with illuminations, and the flame of fireworks turned darkness into day. The trees of the Elysian Fields were festooned with brilliant lamps, shedding a

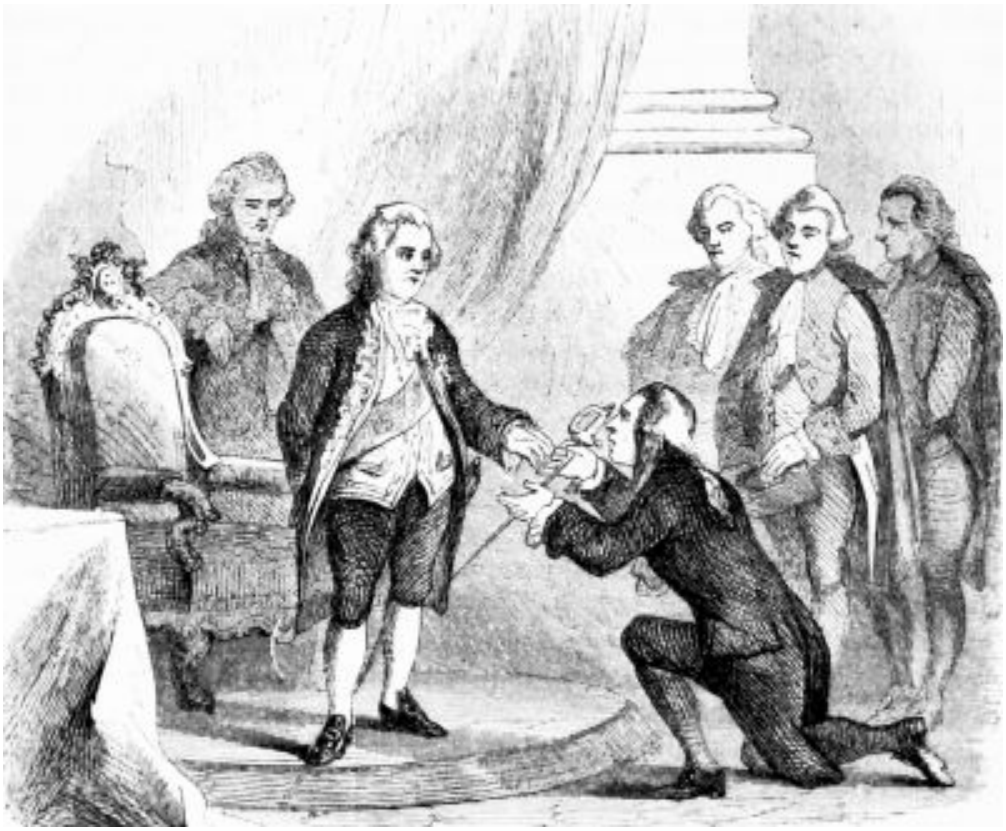
mild light upon the most attractive of scenes. There was no intoxication, no tumult, no confusion. All classes intermingled, with kind words on every lip and kind looks beaming from every face. No carriages were permitted to enter these avenues, that the rich and the poor might share the festivities alike. Pyramids of fire were placed at intervals in the midst of the mass of foliage. The white dresses of the ladies who were sauntering through those umbrageous alleys, the music, the dances, the games, the shouts of laughter, led almost every one to the delusive hope that the old world of care and sorrow had vanished to give place to a new era of universal love and joy.[256]

The site of the Bastille was converted into an open square, and at the entrance of the inclosure was an inscription "*Ici l'on danse*" (Dancing here). For centuries the groans of the captive had resounded through the vaults of that odious prison. The groans had now ceased, and happy hearts throbbed with the excitement of the song and the dance.

La Fayette gave a splendid review of the National Guard. The king, the queen, and the dauphin attended the review, and were warmly greeted by the people. The queen assumed the attitude of reconciliation, and graciously presented her hand to the delegates to kiss.

The delegates from the departments, before they left Paris, went in a body to present their homage to the king. With one voice they expressed to him their respect, gratitude, and affection. The chief of the Bretons dropped on his knee and presented to the monarch his sword.

"Sire," said he, "I deliver to you, pure and sacred, the sword of the faithful Bretons. It shall never be stained but with the blood of your enemies."



LOUIS XVI. AND THE DEPUTATION OF THE BRETONS.

The heart of the kind-hearted king was touched. He returned the sword, and, throwing his arms around the neck of the chief of the Bretons, said, in tones broken with emotion,

> "That sword can not be in better hands than those of my dear Bretons. I have never doubted their fidelity and affection. Assure them that I am the father, the brother, the friend of all the French."

For a moment there was silence, and all alike were moved by the affecting scene. The chief of the Bretons then rejoined,

> "Sire, all the French, if I may judge from our hearts, love and will love you because you are a citizen-king."

Many of the most influential men in England contemplated with admiration this immense reform, in which, to use the language of

Professor William Smyth, one of the most candid of English writers, "the Constituent Assembly was supposed to have freed the country from temporal and spiritual thraldom; the government had been rested on free principles; the Bastille had been destroyed, *lettres de cachet* abolished, feudal impediments and oppressions of every kind removed, religious liberty established, the system of law made uniform, the criminal jurisprudence reformed, monasteries abolished; and by making the military force consist of the citizens of the country, freedom, and all those new and weighty advantages, seemed to be forever secured from the machinations of arbitrary power."

The *aristocracy*, however, of England and Europe were struck with alarm. The emancipation of the *people* in France threatened their emancipation throughout the civilized world. Edmund Burke espoused the cause of the aristocracy. With eloquence quite unparalleled he roused England and Europe to war. In view of his fierce invectives Michelet exclaims, in language which will yet be pronounced by the world as not too severe,

> "Mr. Pitt, feeling sure of the European alliance, did not hesitate to say in open parliament that he approved of every word of Burke's diatribe against the Revolution and against France—an infamous book, full of calumny, scurrilous abuse, and insulting buffoonery; in which the author compares the French to galley-slaves breaking their chains, treads under foot the declaration of the rights of man, tears it in pieces and spits upon it. Oh! what a cruel, painful discovery. Those whom we thought our friends are our most bitter enemies."[257]

Thirty thousand copies of Burke's memorable "Reflections" were sold almost in a day. The sovereigns of Europe were so highly elated that they transmitted to him their thanks. The nobles and the higher clergy of France wrote to him letters of acknowledgment, and the nobility of England lavished upon him their applause. These "Reflections" combined aristocratic Europe against popular rights, and the people had no resource left them but to defend their liberties with the sword.

FOOTNOTES:

251. For the speech in full, see Thiers, vol. i., p. 126.

252. M. Fromont, in his memoirs entitled "*Recueil de divers Ecrits relatifs à la Revolution*," very frankly writes, "I repaired secretly to Turin (January, 1790), to the French princes, to solicit their approbation and their support. In a council which was held on my arrival, I demonstrated to them that, if they would arm the partisans of the altar and of the throne, and make the interests of religion go hand in hand with those of royalty, it would save both. The real argument of the revolutionists being force, I felt that the real answer was force. Then, as at present, I was convinced of this great truth—that *religious zeal alone can stifle the Republican mania*.

"In consequence of this dread (of the new order of things), they secretly set at work the most efficacious means for ruining the internal resources and for thwarting the proposed plans, several of which were calculated to effect the re-establishment of order, if they had been wisely directed and supported."

253. "There is no country in the world," says Voltaire, "where there are so many contradictions as in France. The king gives the actors wages, and the curé excommunicates them."

254. "The whole of Europe—on the one hand Austria and Russia, on the other England and Prussia—were gradually gravitating toward the selfsame thought, the hatred of the Revolution. However, there was this difference, that liberal England and philosophical Prussia needed a little time in order to pass from one pole to the other—to prevail upon themselves to give themselves the lie, to abjure and disown their principles, and avow that they were the enemies of liberty."—*Michelet*, p. 327.

255. Memoirs of the Marquis of Ferrières.

256. No one familiar with the writings of that day will affirm that this description is too highly drawn. Upon this point Patriots and Royalists agree. See Ferrières, t. ii., p. 89, on the part of the Royalists, and Alphonse Esquiros, p. 38, on the part of the Revolutionists.

257. Michelet's French Revolution, p. 415.

Chapter XX.
Flight of the King

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The grand gala days, in the Field of Mars, celebrating the formation of the Constitution, soon passed. The twenty thousand delegates, having been fêted even to satiety, returned to their homes; the Constituent Assembly resumed its labors.[258] The cares and toils of life again pressed heavily upon the tax-exhausted and impoverished millions of France.

The Belgians, in imitation of France, had commenced a struggle for freedom. The King of France permitted Austria to send her troops across the French territory into Belgium to crush the patriots. Many of the most influential of the opponents of the Revolution were still leaving France and uniting with the armed emigrants on the frontiers. England, Austria, Sardinia, and Prussia were manifestly forming an alliance to punish the French patriots, and to restore the tyranny of the execrable old régime. The court, emboldened by these proceedings, were boasting of the swift destruction which was to overwhelm the advocates of reform, and commenced a prosecution of Mirabeau, the Duke of Orleans, and others of the popular party, for instigating the movement of the 5th and 6th of October, when the royal family were taken from Versailles to Paris. These movements created much alarm, and even the royal troops at Metz and

Nancy, who were mostly composed of Swiss and Germans, fraternized with the populace.

A new issue of eight hundred millions of bonds or *assignats* was decreed, which quite abundantly replenished the treasury. There was never a paper currency created upon so valuable a pledge, or sustained by security more ample and undoubted. The assignats represented the whole public domain, and could at any time be exchanged for the most valuable landed property. Still, Talleyrand with singular precision predicted the confusion which eventually resulted from these issues.

In the majestic march of events, Necker had for some time been passing into oblivion. The king had been forced to recall him. Hated by the court, neglected by the Assembly, forgotten by the people, he soon found his situation insupportable, and, sending in his resignation, retired to Switzerland, from which safe retreat he watched the terrific gatherings of the revolutionary storm.

Civil war was sure to break out the moment the court could obtain possession of the person of the king. The pliant nature of the monarch would immediately yield to the influences which surrounded him, and the court, under such circumstances, could find no difficulty in inducing him to sanction any acts of violence to regain their power. But while the king was in Paris, in the hands of the Assembly, he would sanction the decrees of the Assembly, and thus the aristocrats could not wage war against the patriots without at the same time waging war against the king. Foreign monarchies could not be induced to take this step. Thus the retention of the king was peace; his escape, civil war. The court were plotting innumerable plans to effect his escape. La Fayette, at the head of the National Guard, was fully awake to the responsibility of guarding him with the utmost vigilance. The king was apparently left at perfect liberty, but he was continually watched. The queen was exceedingly anxious for flight. The king was ever vacillating, but generally, influenced by such advisers as Mirabeau and La Fayette, inclined to accept the Revolution. He was also haunted with the idea that his cousin, the Duke of Orleans, wished to frighten him into flight, that the Assembly might declare the throne vacant, and place the sceptre in the duke's hand as the sworn friend and supporter of the Revolution.

Mirabeau had commenced his career as one of the most ardent advocates of reform, but he now wished to arrest the progress of the revolutionary chariot, as he affirmed that it had passed beyond its proper goal. His course was attributed by some to bribery on the part of the court. His friends say that he was only influenced by his own patriotic intelligence. At St. Cloud there is a retired summer-house, embowered in foliage, at the summit of a hill which crowns the highest part of the park. The queen appointed an interview with Mirabeau at this secluded spot.

The statesman of gigantic genius, who seemed to hold in his hand the destinies of France, left Paris on horseback one evening, under pretense of visiting a friend. Avoiding observation, he turned aside into a by-path until he reached a back gate of the park. Here he was met in the dark by a nobleman, who conducted him to the retreat of the queen, who was waiting to receive him. His constitution was already undermined by dissipation and unintermitted labors. His cheeks were sunken, his eyes inflamed, his complexion sallow, and a flabby corpulency announced the ravages of disease; but, notwithstanding all these defects, his genial spirit and courtly bearing made him one of the most fascinating of men.[259]

The queen was then thirty-five years of age. Care and grief had sadly marred her marvelous beauty. Her proud spirit was chagrined in being compelled to look for support to one of the leaders of the people. But little is known respecting what passed at this private interview. At its close Mirabeau said to the queen,

> "Madam, when your august mother admitted one of her subjects to the honor of her presence, she never dismissed him without allowing him to kiss her hand."

The queen, responding to the gallantry, graciously presented her hand. Mirabeau, bowing profoundly, kissed it, and then, raising his head, said proudly,

> "Madam, the monarchy is saved."[260]

Suddenly Mirabeau became rich, set up a carriage, furnished his house sumptuously, and gave magnificent entertainments. He immediately

commenced a course of cautious but vigorous measures to overthrow the Constitution and establish one less democratic, which should give more stability and efficiency to the royal power. He affirmed that this was essential to the peace and prosperity of France, and that, instead of being bought over by the court, he had bought the court over to his views.

"But suppose the court refuses," said one of his friends, "to adopt your plans?"

"They have promised me every thing," Mirabeau replied.

"But suppose they should not keep their word?" it was rejoined.

"Then," said Mirabeau, "I will overthrow the throne and establish a republic."

It can hardly be denied that the Constitution was too democratic for a monarchy and hardly democratic enough for a republic. In the natural course of events public opinion would sway either to strengthening the throne or to diminish still more its prerogatives. There were now four parties in France. The first consisted of the old aristocratic classes of the clergy and the nobles, now mostly emigrants, and busy in effecting a coalition of surrounding monarchies to quell the Revolution, and by fire and sword to reinstate the rejected despotism of the Bourbons.

The second class was composed of the king and Mirabeau, with the queen reluctantly assenting to its principles, and others of the nobles and priests who were disposed, some from choice and others from the consciousness of necessity, partially to accept the Revolution. They were willing to adopt a constitution which should seriously limit the old prerogatives of the crown. But they wished to repudiate the constitution now adopted, and to form one less democratic, which would still grant many prerogatives to the king.

The third party consisted of the great majority of the Assembly, headed by sincere and guileless patriots like La Fayette, and sustained probably by the great majority of the purest and best men in the kingdom, who were in favor of the constitution which the nation had accepted. While they did not regard it as perfect, they felt that it was a noble advance in the right direction, and that the salvation of the liberties of France now depended upon allegiance to this constitution.

There was a fourth class, restless, tumultuous, uninformed, composed of the lowest portion of the populace, who could ever be roused to phrensy

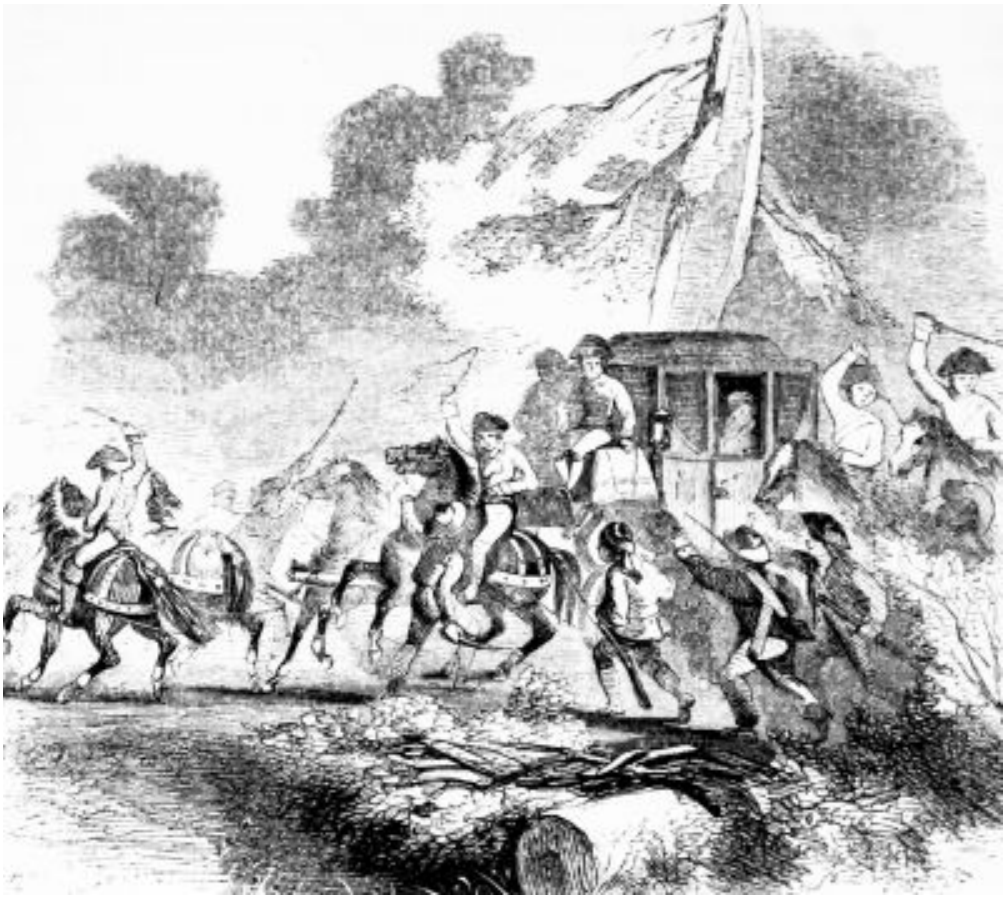
by the cry of "Aristocracy," who were ripe for any deeds of violence, and who regarded that firmness of law which protected order, property, and life as tyranny. They occupied the lowest possible platform of democracy.

Such was the condition of France as the Constituent Assembly now endeavored to consolidate the new institutions and to bring harmony from the chaos into which the nation had been plunged. While in these circumstances of unparalleled peril, combined Europe was watching for an opportunity to pounce upon the distracted nation.

All public functionaries were required to take oath to the new constitution. The clergy, as bound by the laws of the Romish Church, appealed to the Pope for instructions. At the same time the opposing bishops and nobles wrote to the Pope urging him to withhold his assent.[261] The king had sanctioned the decrees. The Pope, under various pretexts, postponed an answer. Many of the bishops and curates consequently refused to take the oath. The Assembly was not disposed to wait for the decision of a foreign potentate, and, accepting those bishops and curates who took the oath, immediately nominated new bishops and curates to take the place of those who refused. Justly and frankly the Assembly declared that it wished to do no violence to conscience, but that it could not appoint as public functionaries those men who refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Constitution of the kingdom. This increased exasperation, and enabled many of the bishops to appeal to the fanatic populace to rise in defense of the endangered Church.

The emigrants now made a general rendezvous at Coblentz, in the territory of the Elector of Treves, and at other points of the frontier.[262] These men, composing what was called the court, consisted mainly of the higher nobles who had long been pampered with the favors of the monarchy, and who looked with contempt upon the nobles of the rural districts. Haughty, dissolute, and frivolous, they scorned any appeal to the popular arm, even to popular fanaticism for support. The only recourse to which they would condescend were the armies of England, Austria, and Prussia. The rural nobles, on the other hand, and the rural bishops, were secretly organizing their friends within the kingdom to fall fiercely in civil war upon the patriots so soon as the solid battalions of the allies should cross the frontiers.[263]

In this state of things the king's aunts decided to leave France. They had proceeded in their carriage on the way to Rome as far as Arnay-le-Duc, when they were arrested. The feverish state of the public mind led to suspicions that their emigration might accelerate impending perils. The Assembly took the matter into deliberation whether the ladies should be permitted to depart. The question was settled by a keen sally of Menou.



MOB OPPOSING THE FLIGHT OF THE KING'S AUNTS.

"All Europe," said he, "will be astonished to learn that a great Assembly has spent several days in deciding whether two old ladies shall hear mass at Paris or at Rome."

The worthy ladies continued the journey without interruption. The king's next elder brother, usually called Monsieur, subsequently Louis XVIII., remained with the king in Paris. The next brother, however, the Count d'Artois, subsequently Charles X., was actively participating with the emigrants at Coblentz. The very difficult question respecting emigration was now brought forward in the Assembly. It seemed to be a

gross act of tyranny to prohibit French citizens from withdrawing from or entering France at their pleasure. On the other hand the enemies of regenerated France were daily leaving the kingdom with all the resources they could collect; and from the frontier, where they were plotting foreign and civil war, they were continually entering the kingdom to make preparations for the invasion.

Mirabeau, who was at this time conspiring for the escape of the king, with his accustomed vehemence and his overpowering audacity, opposed any law against emigration.[264]

"I admit," said he, "that a bad use is made of this liberty at the present moment. But that by no means authorizes this absurd tyranny. I beg you to remember that I have all my life combated against tyranny, and that I will combat it wherever I find it. That popularity to which I have aspired, and which I have enjoyed, is not a feeble reed. I will thrust it deep into the earth, and will make it shoot up in the soil of justice and of reason. And I now solemnly swear, if a law against emigration is voted, I swear to disobey you."[265]

The Assembly was truly in a dilemma. They could not prohibit emigration without grossly violating that declaration of rights which they had just adopted with solemnities which had arrested the attention of the world. They could not permit this flood of emigration without exposing France to ruin; for it was well known that the nobles, with all the wealth they could accumulate, were crossing the frontiers merely to organize themselves into armies for the invasion of France.

Mirabeau never displayed more power than on this occasion, in overawing and commanding the Assembly. He succeeded in arresting the measure. This, however, was his last triumph. Disease was making rapid ravages, his frame was exhausted, and death approached. A sudden attack of colic confined him to his chamber, and soon all hope of recovery was relinquished. He was still the idol of the people, and crowds, in breathless silence, thronged around his abode, anxious to receive bulletins of his health. The king and the people alike mourned, for both were leaning upon that vigorous arm.

He could not repress an expression of satisfaction in view of his labors and his accomplishments. To his servants he said, "Support this head, the

greatest in France." "William Pitt," he remarked, "is the minister of preparations. He governs with threats. I would give him some trouble if I should live."[266] On the morning of his death he said to an attendant,

> "Open the window. I shall die to-day. All that can now be done is to envelop one's self in perfumes, to crown one's self with flowers, to surround one's self with music, that one may sink quietly into everlasting sleep."

Soon, in a paroxysm of extreme agony, he called for opium, saying, "You promised to save me from needless suffering."

To quiet him a cup was presented, and he was deceived with the assurance that it contained the desired fatal opiate. He swallowed the draught, and in a moment expired, in the forty-second year of his age. It was the 2d of April, 1791. His death caused profound grief. All parties vied alike in conferring honor upon his remains. The nation went into mourning, a magnificent funeral was arranged, and the body was deposited in the tomb with pomp surpassing that which had accompanied the burial of the ancient kings of France. Suspicions are still cherished that Mirabeau died the victim of poison.[267]

The funeral of Mirabeau was the most imposing, popular, and extensive of any recorded in history, always excepting that unparalleled display of a nation's gratitude and grief which accompanied the transfer of the remains of Napoleon from St. Helena to the Invalides. It is estimated that four hundred thousand men took a part in the funeral pageant of Mirabeau. The streets were draped in mourning, and pavements, windows, balconies, and house-tops were thronged with sad and silent spectators.

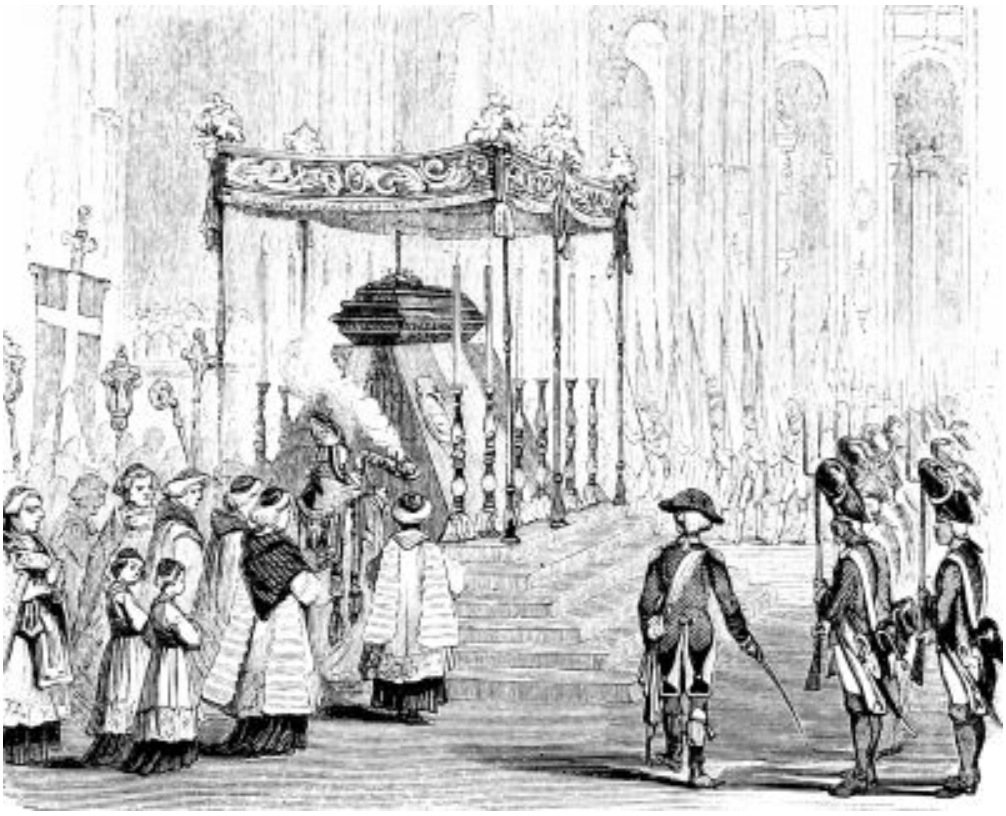
La Fayette headed the immense procession, and was followed by the whole Constituent Assembly, and by the whole club of Jacobins, who, in a dense mass, assumed to be chief mourners on the occasion, though Mirabeau had for some time held himself aloof from their tumultuous meetings. It was eight o'clock in the evening before the procession arrived at the Church of Saint Eustache, where a funeral oration was pronounced by Cérutti. The arms of twenty thousand of the National Guard were then discharged at once. The crash caused the very walls of the church to rock, shivering to atoms every pane of glass.

It was now night, and, by the light of a hundred thousand torches, the procession resumed its course. New instruments of music had been invented, which were then heard for the first time—the trombone and the tamtam. As the vast procession traversed the streets through the gloomy shades of night, illumined by the glare of flickering torches, with the tolling of bells, blending, now with the wail of the chant and now with the pealing requiems of martial bands, all the elements of sublimity seemed combined to affect the heart and overawe the soul. It was near midnight when the sarcophagus was deposited in its tomb at the Church of Saint Geneviève, over whose portal was inscribed these words,

"AUX GRANDS HOMMES LA PATRIE RECONNAISSANTE."

Mirabeau was the master-spirit of the Revolution. After his death there were multitudes struggling for the leadership, with no man of sufficient prominence to attain and retain it. The funeral of Mirabeau was the funeral of emancipated France. From that hour the Revolution was on the rush to ruin.

"Time," writes Michelet, "which reveals every thing, has revealed nothing that really proves the reproach of treason to be well founded. Mirabeau's real transaction was an error, a serious, fatal error, but one that was then shared by all in different degrees. At that time all men, of every party, from Cazalès and Maury down to Robespierre, and even to Marat, believed France to entertain Royalist opinions. All men wanted a king. The number of Republicans was truly imperceptible. Mirabeau believed that it was necessary to have a king with power, or no king at all. It is true that Mirabeau appears to have received sums to defray the expense of his immense correspondence with the Departments—a sort of ministry that he was organizing at his own house. He makes use of this subtle expression—this excuse which does not excuse him—that he had not been bought; *that he was paid, not sold*."[268]



FUNERAL OF MIRABEAU.

The death of Mirabeau seemed to paralyze the hopes of the king, and he now resolved to spare no endeavors to secure his escape. On the 18th of April the king took his carriage at Versailles, intending to ride to St. Cloud. A rumor spread through the city that he was contemplating flight. The populace collected and stopped the horses. La Fayette immediately hastened to the spot with a company of the guards, dispersed the mob, who offered no other violence than to obstruct the departure of the king, and cleared a passage. The king, however, who now wished to have it appear that he was held a prisoner, as most certainly he virtually was, refused to go, and returned indignantly into the palace.

By the advice of his ministers he repaired to the Assembly, and complained warmly of the insult he had encountered. The king was received with the utmost kindness by the Assembly, cordially greeted, and was assured that every thing should be done to prevent the possible occurrence of another similar outrage.

To disarm suspicion and appease the public mind the king, on the 23d of April, sent a letter to the foreign embassadors declaring that he had no

intention of leaving France, that he was resolved to be faithful to the oath which he had taken to the Constitution, and that all those who intimated any thing to the contrary were his enemies and the enemies of the country. He soon after, however, declared to an envoy sent to him from the Emperor Leopold, that this letter by no means contained his real sentiments, but that it was wrung from him by the peril of his situation.[269]

A conference of the foreign powers was held on the 20th of May, 1791, at Mantua, in Italy, where Leopold, Emperor of Austria, and brother of Marie Antoinette, then chanced to be. At this conference Count d'Artois appeared in behalf of the emigrants. Prussia was represented by Major Bischofverder, England by Lord Elgin, and Louis XVI. by the Count de Durfort. Several other of the kingdoms and principalities of Europe were represented on the occasion. The Count de Durfort returned from this conference to Louis XVI. in Paris, and brought him the following secret declaration in the name of the Emperor Leopold:[270]

Austria engaged to assemble thirty-five thousand men on the frontiers of Flanders. At the same time fifteen thousand men from the smaller German States would attack Alsace. Fifteen thousand Swiss troops were to be marched on Lyons, and the King of Sardinia, whose daughter the Count d'Artois had married, was to assail Dauphiné. The king of Spain, cousin of Louis XVI., was to gather twenty thousand troops upon the slopes of the Pyrenees, to fall like an avalanche down upon southern France. Prussia engaged to co-operate cordially. The King of England, notwithstanding the eloquence of Burke's pamphlet, could not yet venture to call upon the liberty-loving English to engage in this infamous crusade against the independence and the liberty of a sister kingdom. But the king, as Elector of Hanover, engaged to take an active part in the war. A protest against the Revolution was to be drawn up in the name of the whole house of Bourbon, whose *divine right* to despotism in France had been questioned by the French people, and this protest was to be signed by those branches of the Bourbons who were occupying the thrones of Spain, Naples, and Parma.[271]

Plans for the invasion having been thus arranged, Louis XVI. resolved immediately to effect his escape to the frontier. He could then place himself at the head of these foreign armies, and lash France into

obedience, and consign those patriots who had been toiling for liberty to the dungeon and the scaffold.

Never was the condition of a nation more full of peril, or apparently more hopeless. This impending destruction was enough to drive any people into the madness of despair. It is hard to wear the fetters of bondage even when one has never known any thing better. But, after having once broken those chains and tasted the sweets of liberty, then to have the shackles riveted anew is what few human spirits can endure.

It was not the intention of the king immediately to leave France. He arranged to go to Montmedy, about two hundred miles from Paris, taking the very retired Chalons road through Clermont and Varennes. The Marquis of Bouillé, a general entirely devoted to the court party, formed a camp at Montmedy to receive the king, under the pretense of watching hostile movements on the frontiers. Small detachments of cavalry were also very quietly posted at different points on the road to aid in the flight. All the arrangements were made for starting on the 20th of June.[272]

The king, though on the whole a worthy man, and possessing some excellent traits of character, was in some points weak almost to imbecility. All the energy of the family was with the queen, and she, with the Marquis of Bouillé, planned the escape. They were often thwarted, however, in their wishes by the obstinacy of the king. La Fayette was entirely deceived, and but few even of the court were intrusted with the secret. Still, rumors of flight had been repeatedly circulated, and the people were in a state of constant anxiety lest the court should carry off the king. They hardly believed that the king himself wished to join the emigrants, and to urge war against the Constitution which he had sworn to accept.

The Swiss Guards still surrounded the Tuileries. They were stationed, however, only at the exterior posts. The interior of the palace, the staircases, and the communications between the rooms were occupied by the National Guard, in whom the nation could place more reliance. It was a long-established custom that troops should be thus stationed throughout the palace, that the royal family might be protected from impertinence or from any irruption of popular violence. Since the terrible scenes of the 5th and 6th of October it became more important than ever that a strong guard should encircle the royal family. But while the ostensible duty of this

guard was only to protect the king from insult, it had also a secret mission to prevent the king's escape.

La Fayette, to whom the whole business was intrusted, oppressed with the responsibility of his office, was continually, by night and by day, visiting the posts. To the officers who had charge of the night-watch he had given secret orders that the king was not to be permitted to leave the palace after midnight. Thus the king was truly a prisoner, and he was fully conscious of it, though every possible effort was adopted to conceal from him the humiliating fact.

M. Bouillé and the queen were compelled to yield to the whims of the king, and to adopt measures which threatened to frustrate the plan. The king insisted upon having an immense carriage constructed which could take the whole party, though the unusual appearance of the carriage would instantly attract all eyes; he insisted upon traveling a very unfrequented route, which would excite the curiosity of every one who should see the carriage pass; he insisted upon stationing military detachments along the route, though Bouillé urged that such detachments if small could render no service, and if large would excite suspicion; he insisted upon taking the governess of the children, because the governess said that she loved the children too much to be separated from them, though Bouillé urged that instead of the incumbrance of a governess they should take in the carriage an officer accustomed to traveling, and who could aid in any unexpected emergency. The king, though fickle as the wind upon questions of great moment, was, like all weak men, inflexible upon trifles.[273]

At midnight of the 20th of June, the king, the queen, Madame Elizabeth, the sister of the king, the two royal children, and Madame Tourzel their governess, carefully disguised themselves in one of the interior rooms of the Tuileries. Creeping cautiously down, in three successive parties, an obscure flight of stairs, and emerging by a gate which was contrived to be left unguarded, the fugitives, mingling with the groups of people who ever at that time were leaving the chateau, crossed the Carrousel, and, taking different streets, groped along through the darkness until they all met on the Quai des Théatins, where two hackney-coaches awaited them. In breathless silence they took their seats. The Count de Fersen, a Prussian noble, young, handsome, enthusiastic, who

was inspired with a chivalric admiration of Marie Antoinette, had made all the arrangements for the escape from the city. Disguised as a coachman, he conducted the king, who led the young dauphin by the hand. The count immediately mounted the box of the coach which contained the royal family, and drove rapidly some twelve miles to the little town of Bondy, where the capacious carriage constructed for the king was waiting before the door of an Englishman, Mr. Crawford. At the same hour in a similar manner the king's brother, Monsieur the Count of Provence, subsequently Louis XVIII., left the Palace of the Luxembourg, and with his family traveled all night toward Flanders, where he crossed the frontiers in safety.

At Bondy the king, the queen, Madame Elizabeth, the two children, Maria Theresa being about ten years of age and Louis seven, with their governess, took their seats in the large carriage. One of the body-guard of the king, disguised as a servant, sat on the box, and another, as footman, sat behind. M. de Vallory rode on horseback, that he might gallop forward and order the relays of horses. The waiting women of the queen, who, by the strangest infatuation, had been included in the party, took the other carriage.

The Marquis of Bouillé, an energetic, heroic man, finding that he could not control the arrangements of the king, did every thing in his power to avert the suspicion which the strange-looking cortège would be likely to excite. He had a passport prepared, in which the governess was represented as a German baroness, Madame de Korff, traveling with her two children. The king was her valet-de-chambre, the queen her waiting-maid. The proverbial wealth of the German barons and the peculiar style of the equipage to which they were accustomed happily favored this idea.[274]

The morning was just beginning to dawn as Count Fersen kissed the hands of the king and queen and left them to prosecute their perilous journey, while he took flight for the frontier through Flanders. The coach was drawn by six horses, who were driven at the utmost speed, relays of horses having been established at short stages. The sun at length rose bright and cheerful. The country was smiling in all the verdure of blooming June. Every revolution of the wheels was bearing them farther from Paris. It was hardly possible that their flight could be discovered until a late hour in the morning. There were no telegraphs in those days to

send intelligence with lightning speed to arrest their flight. Having six or eight hours the start of their pursuers, and being abundantly supplied with fresh horses, escape seemed now almost certain. Hope began to cheer their hearts.

Some slight interruptions had retarded their progress, and it was about three o'clock in the afternoon when they entered Chalons, some ninety miles from Paris. The queen, with an exultant smile, exclaimed, "All goes well. If we were to have been stopped at all it would have been before now."

At Chalons they exchanged horses. The king now felt that he was safe, for the Marquis of Bouillé had posted detachments of troops at every important point between Chalons and Montmedy. With characteristic imprudence, as the carriage was surrounded with idlers at Chalons, the king put his head out of the window, showing his well-known face to the crowd. The postmaster instantly recognized the king, but, being himself an ardent Royalist, divulged not his secret, but aided in putting in the fresh horses, and ordered the postillions to drive on.

About ten miles from Chalons is the bridge of Sommeville, which crosses a narrow stream, where the Duke of Choiseul and M. Goguelat were stationed with fifty hussars. They were to secure the king's passage, and then to remain and block up the road against all pursuers. Faithful to the plan, they were at the bridge, with the mounted hussars, at the appointed hour. The strange assemblage of a military force at that spot excited the curiosity of the peasants, and a great crowd was gathered. Every mind throughout France was then in a very sensitive state. The crowd increased, and in the adjoining villages the alarm-bells were beginning to ring. As the royal carriages did not appear for five or six hours later than they were expected, the Duke of Choiseul, to appease the ferment, left the spot, and the people then dispersed.

Soon after the detachment had left the king arrived, and was surprised to find no troops. It was then between four and five o'clock in the evening. In great perplexity and anxiety he drove rapidly on two hours farther to St. Menehould, where he was to find another detachment of troops; but the Duke of Choiseul had sent forward to St. Menehould and Chalons, informing the detachments there that he had waited six hours for the arrival of the king; that the plan had probably miscarried; that excitement

was rapidly rising among the people; and that the detachments had better retire.

The king, unaware of all this, was astonished and bewildered in still finding no troops, and naturally, but imprudently, again looked out of the window. The excited crowd which was gathered around the carriages suspected that they contained the royal family. A young man named Drouet, son of the postmaster, instantly recognized the king, from his resemblance to the imprint on the coins in circulation. Without communicating his discovery to any one, he mounted a horse, and, taking a cross road, galloped some twelve or fifteen miles to Varennes, to inform the municipality and cause the arrest of the party.

FOOTNOTES:

258. "I have read many histories of revolutions, and can affirm what a Royalist avowed in 1791, that never had any great revolution cost less bloodshed and weeping. In reality, only one class, the clergy, was able, with any appearance of truth, to call itself robbed; and, nevertheless, the result of that spoliation was, that the great bulk of the clergy, starved under the old system for the emolument of a few prelates, had at length a comfortable livelihood."—*Michelet*, p. 417.

259. "If I had never lived with Mirabeau," says Dumont, "I should never have known what a man can make of one day—what things may be placed within the interval of twelve hours. A day for this man is more than a week or a month is for others. The mass of things he guided on together was prodigious; from the scheming to the executing, not a moment lost."—*Dumont*, p. 311.

260. Michelet, p. 333.

261. Thiers, vol. i., p. 166. Ferrières, t. ii., p. 198.

262. "Many of the emigrants had joined the army in a state of complete destitution. Others were spending improvidently the last relics of their fortunes. All were in good spirits, for the camp life was free and joyous. They confidently believed that the end of autumn would find them restored to their splendid homes, to their groves, to their forests, and to their dove-cots."—*Chateaubriand's Memoirs of the Duke de Berri.*

263. See Recueil de divers Ecrits relatif à la Revolution, p. 62; also Chateaubriand's Memoirs of the Duke de Berri.

In reference to England Michelet remarks, with much truth: "The first power is aristocracy, the second aristocracy, and the third aristocracy. This aristocracy goes on incessantly recruiting its body with all those who grow rich. To be rich in order to be noble is the absorbing thought of the Englishman. Property, specially territorial and feudal, is the religion of the country."—*Michelet's French Revolution*, p. 432.

264. "The meeting ended at half past five, and Mirabeau went to the house of his sister, his intimate and dear confidante, and said to her, 'I have pronounced my death-warrant. It is now all over with me, for they will kill me.'"—*Michelet*, p. 461.

265. The peculiar character of Mirabeau is illustrated by the following well-authenticated anecdote. He was, on one occasion, reading a report to the Assembly upon some riots in Marseilles, which he affirmed were fomented by the partisans of the court. He was incessantly interrupted by the aristocratic party with such abusive epithets as "calumniator, liar, assassin, scoundrel." He stopped a moment, looked at them with an imperturbable smile, and, in his most honeyed tones, said, "Gentlemen, I wait till these amenities be exhausted."—*Dumont, Souvenirs*, p. 278.

266. The English *people* were at this time generally in sympathy with the Revolution. The aristocratic *government* of England was in deadly hostility to it. In 1792, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, then head scholar in Jesus College, Cambridge, wrote an Ode to France, commencing with the words,

"When France, in wrath, her giant limbs upreared,
And, with that oath which smote air, earth, and sea,
Stamped her strong foot, and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me how I hoped and feared."

In consequence of this ode, and his avowed attachment to the principles of the Revolution, he became so obnoxious to his superiors that he was constrained to leave the college abruptly, without a degree.—*Cyclopædia of English Literature, Article S.T. Coleridge.*

267. M. Thiers, in the impetuosity of his narrative, is not always accurate in details. He gives the 20th of April as the date of Mirabeau's death. Mignet assigns it to the 2d of March. Nearly all other authorities agree upon the 2d of April. It is indeed wonderful that upon such a subject there should be such a diversity of statement. The event at the time was deemed so momentous, that the Jacobin Club voted that the anniversary of his death should, through all future time, be celebrated with funereal pomp.

268. Mirabeau claims, and his friends claim for him, and probably with justice, that he wished to be the mediator between the Revolution and the monarchy—to save royalty and liberty, believing that, under the circumstances, royalty was essential to liberty. But the folly of the court thwarted every endeavor. They would not accede to any measure of justice and moderation. The court wished only to make him unpopular. Mirabeau saw his position, from which no struggles could extricate him, and he died of disappointment and grief. Had he not then died, he would, in a few months, have inevitably perished upon the scaffold. See *Mémoires de Mirabeau*, vol. viii.

269. Bertrand de Moleville.

270. Mignet, p. 101. Villiaumé, p. 91.

271. Fox and others of the most illustrious of the English commoners had in the parliament expressed their sympathy for the French patriots. A very strenuous effort was made to unite the Whig party in opposition to liberty in France. A meeting was held at Burlington House. Mr. Burke was the organ of the aristocracy. The animated discussion was continued from ten o'clock at night until three in the morning. But the differences of opinion were found irreconcilable, and only resulted in the permanent alienation of Fox and Burke.—*See Lectures on the French Revolution, by Prof. Wm. Smyth*, vol. i., p. 84.

272. "The princes," writes M. Fromont, "conceived the plan of forming legions of all the loyal subjects of the king. Desiring to be at the head of those Royalists whom I had commanded in 1789, I wrote to Count d'Artois, begging his royal highness to grant me the commission of colonel, worded so that every Royalist who would raise a legion might hope for a like favor. The members of his council thought it so strange that a *commoner* should aspire to a military commission, that one of them said to me angrily, 'Why did you not ask for a bishopric?'"—*Recueil de divers Ecrits relatifs à la Revolution*, p. 62.

273. "What grieves us, moreover, among other things, in this journey to Varennes, and lessens the idea we would like to entertain of the king's goodness of heart, is the indifference with which he sacrificed, by his departure, and abandoned to death men who were sincerely attached to him. By the force of circumstances La Fayette found himself to be the involuntary guardian of the king, and responsible to the nation for his person. He had shown in various ways, and sometimes even in compromising the Revolution, that he desired, beyond every thing else, the restoration of the kingly power, as the guarantee of order and tranquillity. There was every reason to suppose that, at the startling news of the king's departure, La Fayette would be torn to pieces.

"La Fayette, receiving warnings from several quarters, would believe nobody but the king himself. He went to him and asked him whether there was any truth in the reports. Louis XVI. gave such a decided, simple answer, and in such a good-natured manner, that La Fayette went away completely satisfied, and it was merely to calm the anxiety of the public that he doubled his guard."—*Michelet*, p. 573.

274. The passport was made out as follows: "De par le roi. Mandons de laisser passer Madame le Baron de Korff, se rendant à Franckfort avec ses deux enfants, une femme de chambre, un valet de chambre, et trois domestiques."

Chapter XXI.
Arrest of the Royal Fugitives

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Arrival at Varennes.—The Party arrested.—Personal Appearance of the King.—The Guards fraternize with the People.—Indignation of the Crowd.—The Captives compelled to return to Paris.—Dismay of M. de Bouillé.—Excitement in Paris.—The Mob ransack the Tuileries.—Acts of the Assembly.—Decisive Action of La Fayette.—Proclamation of the King.—The Jacobin Club.—Unanimity of France.

The carriages were driven rapidly forward, while the royal family sat perplexed and silent, yet quite unprepared for the doom which was impending. An hour's drive brought them to Clermont. Here the king found two squadrons of horse, under Count de Dumas. But the detachments of dragoons moving to and fro had excited suspicion, and the populace of Clermont had been roused, and gathered alarmingly around the carriages.

The municipal authorities examined the passports of the travelers, and, finding all apparently correct, allowed them to proceed, but, calling out a detachment of the National Guard, forbade the Dragoons to leave the town. The Dragoons, whose sympathies were with the people, and who knew not on what mission they had been led by their officers, immediately fraternized with the Guards, and their commander, Count Dumas, was indebted to the fleetness of his horse for his escape from arrest. It was midnight when the carriages arrived at Varennes. This little town is situated on both banks of a narrow stream united by a bridge. A tower is at one end of the bridge, supported by a massive and gloomy arch, which arch must be traversed with care to enter upon the bridge, and where a very slight obstacle would prevent any advance; "a relic," says Lamartine, "of the feudal system, in which the nobles captured the serfs, and where, by a strange retribution, the people were destined to capture the monarchy."

The royal family, entirely exhausted with sleeplessness, anxiety, and the travel of twenty-four hours, were all asleep, when the few scattering lights of the town were perceived. They were to change horses here, and the king was distinctly informed that they would find the horses *before crossing the river*. It was, however, afterward decided, without communicating the change to the king, that the fresh horses should be stationed on the other side of the bridge. Thus the carriages could cross the bridge at full speed, and, in case of any popular tumult, could more easily effect a change of horses and departure on the other side.

The king and queen, greatly alarmed in finding no relay of horses, themselves left the carriage, and groped about through the darkened streets seeking for them in vain. A few lights burned dimly here and there in the houses, but all else was the silence and gloom of midnight. The king even knocked at a few doors where lights were seen, and inquired for the relays. The half-roused sleepers could give him no intelligence.

In thus traveling by relays of horses in Europe, each relay has its postillions, who go their appointed stage only. The postillions who had drawn the carriage from the last post-house, entirely unconscious of the dignity of their passengers, having fulfilled their appointed task, weary of waiting, threatened to unharness their horses and leave the carriage in the street until the relay should arrive. By dint of bribes the king induced them to cross the bridge and continue the journey.

Just as they entered the arch beneath the tower to cross the bridge, and when enveloped in almost Egyptian darkness, the horses were stopped by a cart which obstructed the way. Some men seized the bridles of the leaders, and one man on horseback shouted at the window of the carriage the appalling words,

"In the name of the nation, stop! You are driving the king."

Drouet had effectually accomplished his design. Taking a shorter road than that which the carriage pursued, he rode directly to a stable, communicated his secret to the inn-keeper and sent him to give the alarm, while he, with a few comrades whom he hastily gathered, barricaded the bridge with the cart and such other heavy articles as they could lay their

hands upon. The delay upon the other side just gave them time to do this before the carriage entered the vaulted archway.

The king and queen were thunderstruck, and their hearts sank in dismay. Immediately they perceived the signs of a great tumult. The village bells were ringing. Lights were flashing through the gloom. An undefined uproar seemed to increase in the streets, while crowds were collecting on the bridge. One man with a lantern in his hand half entered the carriage and cast the light full upon the faces of each one of the inmates. The travelers were then commanded to alight and exhibit their passports. Drouet, taking the passports, conducted the captives in their carriage back again from the bridge to the door of the mayor of the little town, a grocer by the name of Sausse.

Here there was quite a debate. The passports were made out correctly. The party corresponded with the description. They all declared that they were the Baroness de Korff with her attendants. Sausse appeared to be satisfied. But Drouet, a young man of unusual intelligence and energy, demanded,

> "Why is not the passport signed by the President of the National Assembly? And if you are foreigners, how is it that you have influence to procure fifty dragoons to escort you at St. Menehould, and as many more at Clermont? And why is there a detachment of hussars waiting for you at Varennes?"

LOUIS XVI. ARRESTED AT VARENNES.

In the eagerness of the altercation it became very evident that the counterfeit servants were not menials, and that the assumed baroness was not accustomed to exercise authority over her pretended maid-servant and valet de chambre. By this time a sufficient number of the National Guard had assembled to prevent the possibility of the rescue of the captives by the Hussars. The queen, seeing that all farther attempts at deception were useless, and indignant at the disrespect with which her husband was treated, exclaimed,

> "Since you acknowledge him to be your king, speak to him with the respect which you owe him!"

SCENE AT VARENNES.

The whole party had thus far remained in the carriage. The tumult was rapidly increasing. The bells were ringing, guns firing, drums beating, and a crowd of men and women, in disordered dresses and eagerly vociferating, was fast gathering around the captives. Lights in the distance were seen hurrying to and fro, and armed men in tumultuous bands of excitement and consternation were rushing from all directions. Respectfully Sausse, who appears to have been a very humane man, urged them to alight, and for their own protection to enter the door of the grocery. They did so, and sat down upon the boxes, barrels, and bags which were scattered around. The king now, to save himself from farther insults, appealed to the loyalty of his subjects. He rose, and with dignity said to the crowd,

"Yes! I am your king. Behold the queen and my children. We entreat you to treat us with the respect which the French have always shown to their sovereigns."

With the exception of that courtliness of manners which is almost the inheritance of high birth, there was nothing in the king's personal appearance to inspire deference. Though a somewhat educated and accomplished man, he was totally destitute of any administrative skill or of any initiative powers. He would have embellished almost any situation in private life, as a kind-hearted, conscientious, exemplary man. The costume of a servant, a steward, a tutor, a clerk, was far more in accordance with his abilities and his character than the insignia of royalty. His figure was swollen by a flabby obesity, the result of a ravenous appetite and indolent habits. His legs were too short for his body; the expression of his countenance unintellectual and stolid.

As he appeared before the peasants and townsmen of Varennes that night, exhausted with fatigue and terror, in the mean dress of a *valet*, in a disordered wig, his fat cheeks pale and shrunken, with livid lips aghast and speechless, he excited first emotions of surprise, then of contempt, then of unfeigned pity. "What, that the king! that the queen!" the crowd exclaimed in amazement. The piteous spectacle brought tears into the eyes even of many of the most hostile and obdurate.

Varennes was but thirty miles from Montmedy, which, though in France, was directly on the Germanic frontier. Thus the citizens of Varennes were at but a few hours' march from those terrible armies of the Continent which were threatening to sweep over France with flame and blood. Knowing that their town might be one of the first to encounter the horrors of war, they had been living in the midst of the most terrific alarms. They had hoped that the king was, in heart, in sympathy with the nation, and would place himself at the head of the nation to resist the invaders. Surprise, grief, and indignation struggled in their hearts as they found that the king was actually endeavoring to escape from France to join their enemies. None but those who live on the frontier at such a time can fully realize the terrible significance of the words *the enemy*.

"What!" exclaimed the multitude, "the king running away, abandoning us, his children, and becoming a traitor to the nation; going over to the

enemy, to aid them to burn our homes and massacre us all!"

Some wept; others execrated; others threatened to shoot the king upon the spot. The simple-hearted peasants were, in intelligence, mere children. They had been educated to regard the monarchy as paternal and the king as their father. Choiseul and Goguelat, who, it will be remembered, were stationed at the bridge of Sommeville with fifty hussars, now came clattering into the streets of Varennes with their detachment. At the same time Count Dumas arrived, who had escaped alone from his dragoons, they having abandoned him at St. Menehould.

The grocer's shop was surrounded with a crowd armed with muskets, pitchforks, and axes. Notwithstanding many fierce threats, the officers forced their way through the crowd and entered the shop. There they found the royal family in a deplorable condition. The little boy, Louis, the dauphin, was happily asleep on a low cot bed. His sister, Maria Theresa, three years older, in great terror, was sitting on a bench between her governess and her aunt Elizabeth, clinging tremblingly to their hands. The king and queen were standing by the side of M. Sausse, imploring him to permit them to continue on their way.

Choiseul, grasping significantly the hilt of his sword, said boldly to the king, "Sire, please give immediate orders to depart. I have forty hussars. No time is to be lost. In one hour they will be gained over by the people."

This was true. The hussars were Germans. Blindly obeying their officers, they had no idea of the commission upon which they had been sent. They were now surrounded by the populace, and were listening, with surprise and sympathy, to their narrative of the events. At this critical moment the municipality of Varennes, accompanied by the officers of the National Guard in that place, entered the shop. Accustomed as they had long been to revere and almost to adore royalty, for the rural districts had by no means kept pace with Paris in disregard of the throne, the officers threw themselves upon their knees before the king and said,

"In God's name, sire, do not forsake us; do not quit the kingdom."

"It is not my intention," the king replied, "to leave France. The insults I have suffered force me to leave Paris. I am going only to Montmedy, and I invite you to accompany me thither; only give orders, I pray you, for my carriages to be got ready."

The municipal authorities departed to deliberate, begging the king to wait till the light should dawn. It was now two o'clock in the morning. The chances of escape were every moment diminishing. The crowd, armed with such weapons as they could on the moment seize, had become formidable; the bridge was so barricaded that it could not be passed; and but little reliance could be placed in the fidelity of the hussars. There was, however, a ford near by, where the stream could be passed on horseback. Choiseul and Goguelat entreated the king and queen, with the ladies, immediately to mount on horseback, the king holding the dauphin on the saddle, and, protected by the forty hussars, to cross the stream, and attempt to effect their escape.

The queen, whose personal heroism never forsook her, looked at her children, thought of the bullets which might be showered upon them, and, yielding to a mother's love, hesitated. The king also, who never dishonored himself by an act of cowardice, thought only of the peril of those who were dearer to him than life, and said,

> "But can you assure me that in this struggle a shot may not strike the queen, my sister, or the children? Besides, the municipality does not forbid to let us pass; it merely requests me to wait till daybreak. Moreover, the Marquis de Bouillé is at Stenay, but twenty-four miles distant. He can not fail to learn of my detention, and he will be here with his troops in the morning."

Another weary hour of agitation, tumult, and gathering excitement passed away, and the clock struck three. The hussars were now completely gained over by the people, and were drinking with them "To the Nation."

The municipal authorities, having briefly deliberated, returned to the king with this short but terrible announcement,

> "The people, being absolutely opposed to the king continuing his journey, have resolved to dispatch a courier to the National Assembly in order to be informed of its intentions."

M. de Goguelat now went out into the surging crowd to judge if it were possible to fight their way through. Mounting his horse he rode slowly around, when Drouet approached him and said, "You want to carry off the king, but you shall not have him alive."

The carriage was surrounded by a body of the National Guard. Goguelat approached the carriage with a few hussars who still hesitatingly obeyed his orders, when the major in command of the detachment of the National Guard said to him, "One step farther, and I shoot you."

Goguelat spurred his horse on, when a pistol was discharged. Two bullets struck him, and he fell bleeding to the ground. He was, however, able to rise and enter the shop, but the hussars immediately with acclaim avowed themselves the soldiers of the nation. Goguelat had observed also that at the end of the street there were two cannons planted which seemed ready to fire upon them. There was no longer the possibility of escape by force, unless M. de Bouillé should chance to arrive in season with his well-trained dragoons.

As Goguelat, wounded and covered with blood, again entered the presence of the royal family, they presented a heart-rending spectacle. The queen was sitting upon a bench between two boxes of candles, piteously pleading with the grocer's wife to intercede with her husband in their behalf.

"You are a mother, madame," said the queen; "you are a wife; the fate of a wife and mother is in your hands. Think what I must suffer for these children, for my husband. At one word from you I shall owe them to you. The Queen of France will owe you more than her kingdom, more than life."

There is an instinct, unreflecting, in the human heart, which says that it would have been *noble* in the woman to have periled every thing to save the queen. The universal heart does homage to disinterested benevolence, even when it is unthinking and mistaken. But in this case the good woman, with very natural and prosaic common sense, said,

> "I wish it were in my power to help you. But bless me! you are thinking of your husband and I am thinking of mine. Every woman for her own husband."

This speech certainly did not indicate a heroic nature. But it is obvious that M. Sausse had now no power to save the king. Matters had proceeded far beyond his control. If he could by any stratagem have facilitated the flight, his own life would have been the inevitable forfeit. It would have been treason to the nation. Humanity also seemed imperiously to demand that the king should be stopped. His escape would place him at the head of foreign and hostile armies to ravage France with the horrors of war, and to quench the kindling flame of liberty in blood.

The queen, whose energetic mind foresaw the awful future, was overwhelmed and burst into tears. The king had now lost all self-possession, and was bewildered as a child. The people, who began to be apprehensive that the troops of Bouillé might come to the rescue, were crowding the door and shouting, "Back, back to Paris."

The king was urged to show himself, that he might tranquilize the people. He went to a window and looked out upon the excited multitude, over whom a few torches shed a lurid light. The sight of the king at first produced profound silence. The people then, as versatile as children, were so affected by the appearance of the king in his servile dress, and with his woe-worn countenance, that many wept; and while not one word of insult was heard, many cried out, in compassionate tones, *Vive le Roi*!

The day was then just beginning to dawn. Gradually the sun rose, and shone upon a strange spectacle. The guns, the drums, the alarm-bells had roused the whole country around. Ten thousand men had already assembled in Varennes, choking the narrow street where the grocery stood. From all directions the country people were seen hurrying to the town, as the strange tidings of the attempted flight and arrest were spreading far and wide. As the crowd increased in the streets, and the gloom of night was dispelled by the bright blaze of day, the tumult rose higher and higher. All sympathy for the royal family seemed to give place to a feeling of indignation, that they should be stealing away to lead foreign armies to make war upon the liberties of France.

At seven o'clock the door opened, and the king beheld, to his surprise, an officer of the National Guard of Paris. His dress was disordered, and he was dusty and worn with hurried travel. The man was greatly agitated when he found himself in the presence of the king, and could only stammer, in broken and almost incoherent phrase, the words,

> "Sire, all Paris is being murdered; our wives and children are perhaps assassinated; you shall not go any farther; sire, the interests of the state; yes, sire, our wives and our children."

The queen seized the hand of the officer, and, leading him to a humble bed in the corner, where the two royal children, Maria and Louis, utterly exhausted, were sleeping, said to him, as she pointed to the children,

"Am I not a mother also?"[275]

The king, interrupting her, turned abruptly to the officer, and said,

"What do you want?"

"Sire," he replied, "I have a decree of the Assembly."

"Where is it?" inquired the king.

"My comrade has it," was the reply.

Just then the door opened, and M. de Romeuf entered. He was an aide-de-camp of the Marquis de la Fayette and a true patriot, while at the same time he was well known by the royal family as a friend of the king. He entered, holding the decree in his hand, greatly agitated; and, as he beheld the humiliating condition of the sovereign of France, and was conscious of the most painful duty devolving upon himself, he could not restrain his emotions, but bowed his head and wept bitterly. There is not a generous heart on earth which will not be in sympathy with that grief.

As the queen raised her eyes and saw M. de Romeuf enter, she exclaimed, with surprise and indignation,

"What, sir, is it you? Oh! I could never have believed it possible." Romeuf replied sadly, "We have done only our duty; but we hoped not to have overtaken your majesties."[276]

The king took from the hand of Romeuf the decree of the Assembly and hastily read it. It was an order enjoining upon all public functionaries "to stop, by all the means in their power, *the abduction of the king*, and to prevent the continuance of the journey."

The king indignantly threw the decree upon the bed where the children were sleeping, and exclaimed, in words whose truth he then by no means fully realized,

"*There is no longer any King in France*."

The queen, with pardonable but very injudicious passion, picked up the decree of the National Assembly and threw it upon the floor, saying

vehemently,

"It shall not defile my children."

"Madame," said Romeuf sorrowfully to the queen, to whom he was much attached, "in the name of your safety, your glory, I entreat you to control your grief. Would you rather have any one but me witness these passions?"

The gentle reproach recalled the queen to herself, and she nerved herself to endurance, calmness, and dignity. The mental agony of that dreadful night had already turned her hair from auburn into the whiteness of snow.

It was greatly feared that the troops of Bouillé might come and rescue the king. Preparations for the departure were therefore hastened. Six horses were harnessed into the carriage, and the royal family, notwithstanding they did every thing in their power to cause delay, were forced to take their seats. The queen would not allow any one to touch her son, but carried him in her own arms to the carriage.

The melancholy cortège now commenced its slow progress toward Paris, escorted by four thousand of the National Guard.

M. de Bouillé, as we have mentioned, was at Stenay, at but the distance of eight leagues from Varennes, with several regiments of soldiers under his command, waiting the arrival of the king. Had the king but reached that stage he would have been safe. Bouillé was in a state of great anxiety, and during the night had rode forward to within six miles of Varennes, hoping to meet the king. Perplexed by the delay, and anxious lest he should be abandoned by his soldiers, in whom he could place but little confidence, he rode back to Stenay, and had just arrived there, at half past four in the morning, when he received the intelligence that the king was arrested, that the alarm-bells were ringing, that the whole country was aroused, and the National Guard in Stenay, Metz, and Verdun were rapidly forming in defense of the *Nation*.

Under these circumstances there was but one regiment in whom M. Bouillé could repose any confidence—the Royal German—and but one officer, his own son, in whom he could confide.

Bouillé was an energetic and brave man. He immediately called out the German regiment, and by the influence of impassioned language and enormous bribes to every man induced them to start for the rescue. Almost

with the speed of the whirlwind these strongly mounted dragoons swept the space intervening between Stenay and Varennes. It was a quarter of nine o'clock before they reached the town. The National Guard, anticipating this movement, was strongly posted to repel them. As Bouillé was reconnoitring in preparation for an attack, he was informed that the king had been gone more than an hour and a half; that the bridge was broken down, the streets barricaded; that M. de Choiseul, M. de Goguelat, and M. de Dumas were prisoners; that their hussars had fraternized with the people; that the garrisons of Metz and Verdun were rapidly approaching to attack him, and that the whole country around was swarming with troops and National Guards roused by the peril of the nation.

The horses of the dragoons were entirely exhausted by the forced drive of twenty-four miles; the soldiers themselves gave manifest symptoms of hesitation. All hope was gone. Bouillé slowly, sadly, silently retraced his steps. At Stenay popular enthusiasm had gained all hearts. His soldiers abandoned him, and he narrowly escaped with his life across the frontier to Luxembourg.

We must now return to Paris to record the scenes which transpired there after the flight of the king. At seven o'clock in the morning of the 21st of June the servants at the Tuileries, on entering the apartments of the king and queen, found the beds undisturbed and the rooms deserted. The alarm was speedily spread through the palace, and flew from the chateau like wild-fire through the streets and into the faubourgs. "The king has escaped!" was upon all lips. The crowd, in countless thousands, rushed to the Tuileries. They pressed in at the doors and up the stairs, and explored all the mysterious interior of the palace. The most vile and degraded of the population of the city are always foremost on such occasions. The awe which they at first felt soon gave place to derision.

A portrait of the king was taken from his bed-chamber and hung up at the gate of the chateau. A fruit-woman emptied her basket of cherries upon the queen's bed, and sat down upon the bed to sell her venture, saying "It is the Nation's turn to-day to take their ease." Some one placed a cap from the queen's wardrobe upon the head of a young girl. She threw it contemptuously on the floor and trampled upon it, saying "It will sully my forehead."

For several hours the whole city was in a state of intense consternation. The departure of the king was associated in all minds with the approach of foreign armies, the bombardment of Paris, the sweep of dragoons through the streets, the assassination of the patriots, and the extinction of liberty. The alarm-bells rang, drums beat to arms, minute-guns were fired, and the National Guard rallied at all their rendezvous. But in the midst of these alarms there appeared an apparition which excited intense alarm in the bosoms of all the friends of enlightened liberty and order.

It consisted of vast gatherings of haggard, wretched-looking men, the most worthless and abandoned of the population of a great city, under their own fierce leaders, armed with pikes and all wearing a red cap, the *bonnet rouge*. Santerre, a brewer, an uneducated man, of vast energies, and of great power to lead the passions of the populace, led a band of two thousand of these red-caps through the streets. The indignation of the people was now roused to the highest pitch against the king, and against all who were supposed to have connived at his flight. La Fayette was loudly accused of treason in having allowed the king to escape. His coolness and presence of mind alone saved him from the fury of the mob.

At nine o'clock the Constituent Assembly met, calm, yet fully conscious of the momentous state of affairs. The president immediately informed them that M. Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, had come to acquaint them that the king and royal family had been *carried off*, during the night, by some enemies of the nation. These noble men conducted, in this crisis, with their accustomed moderation and dignity. Hesitating to assume that the king had perjured himself by violating the oath he had so solemnly taken to sustain the Constitution, they adopted the more generous idea of his abduction.

La Fayette, at eight o'clock, had been informed of the escape, and immediately hastened to the Tuileries, where he found M. Bailly, the Mayor of Paris, and M. Beauharnais, President of the National Assembly. They were both oppressed in view of the momentous posture of affairs, and were lamenting the hours which must elapse before the Assembly could be convoked and a decree issued authorizing pursuit. The course pursued by La Fayette upon this occasion was worthy of his heroic and noble nature. He proved himself a consistent disciple of his great friend and model, Washington.

"Is it your opinion," inquired La Fayette, "that the arrest of the king and royal family is absolutely essential to the public safety, and can alone preserve us from civil war?"

"No doubt can be entertained upon that subject," both replied.

"Well, then," returned La Fayette, "I take upon myself all the responsibility of this arrest."

He immediately issued an order to the National Guard throughout France for the arrest of the king.[277] It was placed in the hands of two of his officers, who set out instantly on the pursuit.

Leaving the Tuileries, La Fayette hastened on horseback to the Hôtel de Ville. He passed excited crowds, who inveighed bitterly against him, accusing him of traitorous complicity in the king's flight. Arriving at the Place de Grève, in front of the Hôtel de Ville, he found one of his officers, the Duke d'Aumont, in the hands of the infuriate mob, who were on the point of massacring him.

La Fayette instantly plunged into the crowd, by his authoritative voice and gesture overawed them, and at the imminent peril of his own life rescued his friend. A moment's hesitation, an emotion of cowardice, and both would inevitably have perished. An infuriate man, almost delirious with rage, approached La Fayette, and, shaking his fist in his face, exclaimed,

"You are a traitor. You have permitted the king to escape, and now France is ruined."

"How ruined?" La Fayette replied, serenely smiling. "France has twenty-five millions of inhabitants; the salary of the king is twenty-five millions of francs. Every one of us gains twenty sous by Louis XVI. relieving us of this payment."

This pleasantry created a general laugh, and the words, repeated through the crowd, soon restored good-nature. The heroism of La Fayette also struck their imaginations, and he was greeted with applause as he rode away.

He then hastened to the Assembly, which was now convened. Some of the deputies had suspected him as conniving at the flight, and as he entered a few murmurs arose. He, however, ascended the tribune and gained a hearing. He proposed that his second officer in command, M. de

Gouvion, to whom had been especially intrusted the guard of the Tuileries, should be examined by the Assembly.

"I will answer for this officer," said he, "and take upon myself the responsibility of his acts."

M. de Gouvion was summoned to their bar, and testified that all the ordinary outlets from the palace were carefully guarded. The king could only have escaped in disguise and through some unusual mode of egress. M. Bailly confirmed this testimony, and La Fayette was reinstated in the confidence of the patriots.

The people, who had suspected La Fayette, refused to allow the *aides* whom he had dispatched to pass the barriers. The Assembly immediately issued an order sanctioning the measures of La Fayette, and the officers were permitted to depart. The ministers of the king were then summoned, and a decree passed that all orders were to be received from the Assembly alone. With calmness truly majestic, and with unanimity which apparently pervaded every act, thought, and resolution, preparations were adopted to meet the fearful invasion which was impending.

It was decreed at every hazard to defend the Constitution. The Assembly assumed the Regency. Couriers were dispatched on every road toward the frontiers to arrest every individual leaving the kingdom. Guns were ordered from the arsenals more effectually to arm the National Guard. These measures were so manifestly just and vital, that the most interested partisans of the old despotism ventured no opposition.

While engaged in passing these decrees, M. de la Porte, superintendent of the civil list, entered, bringing with him a private note and a memorial which he had received from the king. The memorial was dated the 20th of June, and was written and signed by the king. It was entitled "*Proclamation of the King to all the French upon his Departure from Paris*."

In this long recital of his grievances the king complained that he had only a *suspensive veto*; that his salary was cut down to five millions of dollars annually, which was not sufficient to support him comfortably; that he was very badly lodged in the palace of the Tuileries; that he had been incessantly annoyed by the National Assembly, the clubs, and the journals, and that he was not properly applauded when he appeared in public. He bitterly censured the decrees of the National Assembly, and avowed that of

his own free will he left Paris, that he might at a safe distance from Paris regain his lost power.[278]

M. de la Porte placed this memorial and the private note to him, which accompanied it, upon the table, stating, however, his wish that the private note might not be read. With delicacy and honor worthy of commemoration it was returned to him unopened. The memorial was read and was listened to in respectful silence. The Assembly pitying the weakness of the king took no action upon it whatever.

INTERIOR OF THE JACOBIN CLUB.

When the National Assembly was in session at Versailles there was a club organized by the deputation from Bretaigne, called the Breton Club. It was composed of the patriotic members of the Assembly. After the removal of the Assembly to Paris this club held its meetings in an old smoky convent of the Jacobin monks, and was hence called the Jacobin Club. It rapidly increased, admitting members not belonging to the

Assembly, until it numbered twelve hundred members in Paris alone. Its affiliated clubs were established all over the kingdom, and were filled with the most ardent advocates of reform. In less than two years they numbered two thousand four hundred societies in as many towns.

The Jacobin Club soon became so intensely and fiercely democratic, that La Fayette, who was one of its original members, and others of the more conservative of the patriots, withdrew from its tumultuous gatherings. This club was now rapidly assuming the reins of government, and marshaling the mob as its resistless and terrific arm of defense, a weapon wielded by the Revolution of incalculable and terrible power. It soon became the relentless and despotic sovereign of France, more relentless and more despotic than any single sovereign who ever sat upon a throne.

La Fayette, upon leaving the Assembly, hastened to the club of the Jacobins, which already in numbers and influence rivaled the Assembly. He was here also successful in stemming the torrent of obloquy which was beginning to roll against him. As he left the club he met, on the Quai Voltaire, Camille Desmoulins. The impetuous journalist, in a state of intense excitement, hastened toward the white horse on which La Fayette rode, and exclaimed:

> "Monsieur de la Fayette, for more than a year I have constantly spoken ill of you. This is the moment to convict me of falsehood. Prove that I am a calumniator. Cover me with infamy by saving the state."

La Fayette grasped the hand of Desmoulins, whose patriotism he respected, and replied,

> "I have always recognized you as a good citizen. You will see that you have been deceived. Our common oath is to live free or to die. All goes well. There is but one feeling in the Assembly. The common danger has united all parties."

"But why," rejoined Desmoulins, "does the Assembly affect to speak of the *carrying off* (enlévement) of the king in its decrees, when the king

himself writes that he escaped of his own free will? What baseness or what treason in the Assembly to use such language, when we are threatened by three millions of bayonets!"

"The word *carrying off*," La Fayette replied, "is a mistake in dictation, which the Assembly will correct. This conduct of the king is infamous."

The news of the flight of the king created consternation through all the departments of France. It was regarded as the signal for both foreign and civil war, and all expected immediately to hear the tramp of hostile legions. With singular unanimity the people of France rallied to meet the crisis. From the Gironde a message was sent to the Assembly, saying,

> "We have eighty thousand men enrolled in the National Guard, who are all ready to march. But we have not as many guns as we have intrepid and patriotic men. Send us arms."

The municipality of Villepaux sent word, "We are all ready to be torn into ribbons rather than allow the integrity of the Constitution to be violated."

"Our fields," wrote the citizens of Allier and Nivernais, "are covered with harvests and men. Men and harvests are alike at the service of the country, if she needs them."

"We are but few, but we are determined," wrote the inhabitants of a little town in Normandy. "We have but two hundred men capable of bearing arms, but they are young, strong, and courageous. They are all ready to rush upon any foe who shall invade the soil of France."

Bordeaux assured the Assembly that it would immediately send two thousand four hundred men to meet the foe. The whole kingdom was in this blaze of patriotic enthusiasm. The ladies, ever participating in devotion to a noble cause, sent in their jewelry to the Assembly, saying,

> "Change these ornaments into arms. It is not in our power to combat for our country; but we can at least aid in arming our brave defenders."

Merchants left their shops, artisans their benches, and laborers the fields, to toil as volunteers in throwing up fortifications around the

exposed towns. All hearts seemed to vibrate with the same hopes and fears, and all hands united in the same patriotic toils. The partisans of the court, few in numbers, were silent, waiting for the approach of foreign armies before they should throw off the mask and avow their treason.

FOOTNOTES:

275. Mirabeau, after his interview with Marie Antoinette, remarked in confidence to a friend, "You know the queen. Her force of mind is prodigious. She is a man for courage."—*Dumont*, p. 211.

276. Napoleon, at St. Helena, speaking in the light of subsequent events, said, "The National Assembly never committed so great an error as in bringing back the king from Varennes. A fugitive, and powerless, he was hastening to the frontier, and in a few hours would have been out of the French territory. What should they have done in these circumstances? Clearly have facilitated his escape, and declared the throne vacant by his desertion. They would thus have avoided the infamy of a regicide government, and attained their great object of republican institutions. Instead of which, by bringing him back, they encumbered themselves with a sovereign whom they had no just reason for destroying, and lost the inestimable advantage of getting quit of the royal family without an act of cruelty."

277. Our readers will not generally sympathize with Lamartine in the exclamation, "This was a dictatorship, and the most personal of all dictatorships, that a single man, taking the place of the Assembly and the whole nation, thus assumed. He, on his private authority and the right of his civic foresight, struck at the liberty and perhaps at the life of the lawful ruler of the nation. This order led Louis XVI. to the scaffold, for it restored to the people the victim who had just escaped their clutches."—*History of the Girondists, by Alphonse de Lamartine*, vol. i., p. 75.

278. Histoire de la Rev. Fr., par Villiaumé, p. 13.

Chapter XXII.
Return of the Royal Family from Varennes

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Proclamation of Marat.—Three Commissioners sent to meet the King.—Address to the Nation from the Assembly.—The slow and painful Return.—Conversation between Barnave and the Queen.—Brutality of Pétion.—Sufferings of the Royal Family.—Reception of the King in Paris.—Conduct of the Queen.—Noble Avowal of La Fayette.—Statement of the King.—Menace of Bouillé.

Almost immediately after the flight of the king the club of the Jacobins became the most formidable power in France. It embraced all the desperate and the reckless advocates of reform. Marat, one of its most popular and energetic members, the morning after the flight of the king, issued the following proclamation to the populace of Paris:[279]

> "People! behold the loyalty, the honor, the religion of kings. Remember Henry III. and the Duke of Guise. At the same table with his enemy did Henry receive the sacrament, and swear on the same altar eternal friendship. Scarcely had he quit the table than he distributed poniards to his followers, summoned the duke to his cabinet, and there saw him fall, pierced with wounds. Trust then to the oaths of princes!
>
> "On the morning of the 19th, Louis XVI. laughed at his oath and enjoyed beforehand the alarm his flight would cause you. The Austrian woman has seduced La Fayette. Louis XVI., disguised in a priest's robe, fled with the dauphin, his wife, his brother, and all the family. He now laughs at the folly of the Parisians, and will soon swim in their blood. Citizens! this escape has been long prepared by the traitors of the National Assembly.

> You are on the brink of ruin; hasten to provide for your safety. Instantly choose a dictator. Let your choice fall upon the citizen who has, up to the present, displayed most zeal, activity, and intelligence, and do all he bids you to do to strike at your foes. This is the time to lop off the heads of Bailly, La Fayette, and all the scoundrels of the staff, all the traitors of the Assembly. A tribune, a military tribune, or you are lost without hope."

Similar impassioned appeals were issued from all the Jacobin journals, and the nation was roused to phrensy. The popularity of the king was now gone, and he was almost universally regarded as a traitor, plotting to deluge the kingdom in blood.

At ten o'clock in the evening of the 22d of June a courier arrived in Paris with a letter from the municipality of Varennes announcing the arrest of the king. The cry resounded from street to street, "He is arrested! he is arrested!" Three commissioners were immediately appointed, Latour Maubourg, Pétion, and Barnave, invested with authority to secure the return of the king and the royal family, and they were enjoined to observe all the respect due to their rank. The Assembly also issued an address to the French nation, containing the following sentiments:

> "The king swore, on the 14th of July, to protect the Constitution; he has therefore consented to perjure himself. The changes made in the Constitution of the kingdom are attributed to a *few* of the factious. We are *twenty-six millions* of factious. We have preserved the monarchy because we believe it useful to France. We have doubtless reformed it, but it was to save it from its abuses and its excesses. We have granted the yearly sum of fifty millions of francs ($10,000,000) to maintain the legitimate splendor of the throne. We have reserved to ourselves the right of declaring war, because we would not that the blood of the people should belong to the ministers.[280] Frenchmen, all is organized. Every man is at his post. The Assembly watches over all. You have naught to fear save from yourselves, should your just emotion

> lead you to commit any violence or disorders. The people who seek to be free should remain unmoved in great crises.
>
> "Behold Paris, and imitate the example of the capital. All goes on as usual. The tyrants will be deceived. Before they can bend France beneath their yoke, the whole nation must be annihilated. Should despotism venture to attempt it, it will be vanquished; or even though it triumph, it will triumph over naught but ruins."

Let us now return to Varennes, and accompany the royal family on their melancholy route to Paris. We left the royal carriages, under the escort of the National Guard, just starting from Varennes on their return. It was eight o'clock in the morning. The progress toward Chalons was slow, for the carriages could only keep pace with the guards. The heat was intense, and clouds of dust almost suffocated the captives. For a time emotions were too deep for utterance, and not a word was spoken. But often torrents of abuse fell upon the ears of the king from the crowds who seemed to line the way. At times the crowd was so dense that with some difficulty the guards forced their way through. But for the protection of their bayonets, the whole royal family would probably have fallen victims to the popular fury.

The commissioners from the Assembly met the carriages between Dormans and Epernay, and immediately assumed the command of the troops, and took the royal family under their charge. The whole populace, excited as it was, respected the orders of the Assembly. Latour Maubourg, a gentleman of noble character and an intimate friend of La Fayette, was ardently attached to the Constitution, while at the same time he was anxious to save the monarchy. The tendencies of both of his colleagues were to a more radical democracy. Hoping to excite their sympathy in behalf of fallen greatness, he yielded to his companions the honor of being with the royal family in their carriage, while he took the second coach, with Madame de Tourzel and some other ladies of the party. Barnave and Pétion entered the king's carriage to share his danger and to shield him from insult. Barnave sat on the back seat, between the king and the queen. Pétion sat in front, between Maria Theresa, the daughter of the king, and

Madame Elizabeth, his sister. The little dauphin, seven years of age, sat on the lap now of one, then of another.

Barnave was a young lawyer of distinguished abilities and generous impulses. He was a man of polished manners, of attractive person, and of accomplished education. His generous heart was saddened by the pitiable condition of his captives. He did every thing he could, by kindness and respectful attentions, to mitigate their woe. An obnoxious priest at one time approached the carriage with an ostentatious demonstration of his attachment to the court party, now threatening France with invasion. The exasperated people fell upon him, and he would probably have been massacred but for the energetic interposition of Barnave.

"Frenchmen!" he exclaimed, "will you, a nation of brave men, become a nation of murderers?"

He would have sprung out of the carriage to have rescued the priest had not Madame Elizabeth, who had already appreciated his noble character, held him in by the skirt of his coat. She feared that he also, now almost their sole defender, might be torn in pieces. At first the queen sat closely veiled and maintained unbroken silence. But gradually the character of Barnave won the esteem of the whole party. The king entered calmly into conversation with Barnave upon the momentous questions of the day. Barnave replied with courtesy and sympathy, though still faithful in his devotion to liberty and sincere in his advocacy of a constitutional throne. The queen, much mollified, at length withdrew her veil and gradually became social and almost confiding.

Barnave spoke of the great mistakes which the Royalists had made in refusing to accept a *constitutional monarchy*, thus exposing the throne to entire overthrow and the nation to democratic anarchy.

"What were the means," inquired the queen, "which you would have advised me to resort to?"

"Popularity, madam," was the reply.

"But how," continued the queen, "could I have obtained popularity? It was all taken from me."

"Ah, madam," said Barnave, "it was much easier for you to conquer it than for me to obtain it."[281]

The queen subsequently remarked to Madame Campan that Barnave "was a young man full of intelligence and noble sentiments, and one every way worthy to inspire esteem. A feeling of pride," she continued, with candor which honors her memory, "has caused him to applaud all that tends to smooth the way to honors and glory for the class in which he was born. If power should ever again fall into our hands the pardon of Barnave is written before in our hearts."

The royal family only occasionally alighted for a moment at an inn as the horses were being changed. By day and by night they continued their slow progress, taking all their refreshments in the carriage. Barnave, with that delicacy which is instinctive in noble natures, never for a moment forgot the rank of his august captives. Being pressed by the queen to take some refreshment, he replied,

> "Madam, the deputies of the National Assembly, under circumstances so solemn, ought to trouble your majesty solely with their mission, and by no means with their wants."

Pétion was a very different character. He was one of those coarse and vulgar demagogues who have done so much to cast dishonor upon the word *democracy*. His brutality disgusted the whole party. Equality of rights was with him but social insolence. He affected a rude familiarity with the royal family, munching his food like a boor and throwing the rind of fruit and the bones of fowls out of the window, at the risk of hitting the king in the face. The king made a slight attempt, by introducing conversation with him, to awaken some sympathy.

"It was my wish," said the king, "to increase the force of the executive power. I did not think that this constitutional act could be maintained without more power being placed in the hands of the sovereign, since France does not wish to be a republic."

"Not yet, to be sure," Pétion brutally replied; "the French are not yet quite ripe enough for a republic."

No more conversation was held with Pétion. The movement of the carriages, encumbered by the escort and the immense crowds who thronged the way, was very slow. Four days were occupied in the return. It was seven o'clock in the evening of the 25th when the long procession

entered Paris. As the carriages approached the suburbs the crowd increased in density. It had been a day of intense heat. The blaze of the sun, reflected by the pavements and by the bayonets which surrounded the carriage, was almost intolerable. The carriages were continually enveloped in a dense cloud of dust. The inmates panted for breath and were bathed in perspiration. One of the children suffered so much that the queen, alarmed, appealed to the compassion of the crowd.

"See, gentlemen," she said, letting down one of the windows, "in what a state my poor children are; one is choking."

A brutal wretch exclaimed, in an under tone, "We will soon choke you, after another fashion."

Generally the crowd looked on in amazement and silence. Feelings of pity and humanity triumphed over indignation. Great eagerness was of course manifested to catch a sight of the king and queen, but well-armed guards on horseback surrounded the carriages. La Fayette came out of the city to meet the cortège at a few miles distance and to assume the command. Apprehensive of violence from the infuriate populace of Paris, if the immense cortège, now numbering nearly three hundred thousand and rapidly increasing, were to pass through the narrow streets of the city, the carriages were ordered to take a circuit and enter by the broad avenue of the Elysian Fields, which conducted directly to the Tuileries. As an additional precaution he placed troops in a deep line on both sides of the avenue from the Barrier de l'Etoile to the palace.

It was resolved that the king should be received in silence, without applause and without abuse. Placards were posted every where with the laconic announcement,

> "Whoever applauds the king shall be flogged; whoever insults him shall be hanged."[282]

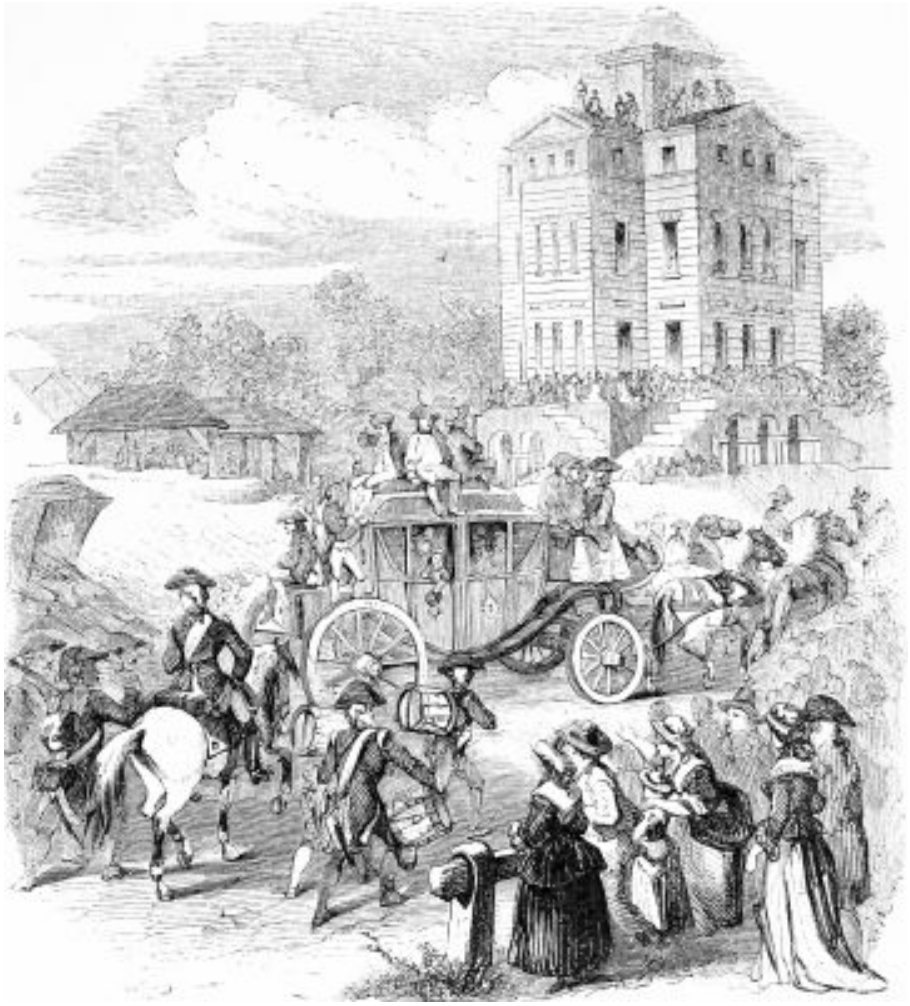
The procession now entered the city amid the clashing of sabres, the trampling of horses, and the confused, suppressed murmurs of half a million of men. It was another sublime act in that most terrible tragedy of time. It can not be described; it can not be fully conceived; it has never been paralleled.

The crowd-encompassed, dust-enveloped carriages entered the city at the close of one of the most lovely of June afternoons. The cloudless sun, still an hour above the horizon, shone brilliantly upon the spectacle, gilding steeples and domes as with rejoicing light. The whole military array of Paris, horsemen, artillery, and infantry, lined that majestic avenue. Behind them the whole population of Paris seemed to flood the field, filling windows, balconies, house-tops, steeples, trees, and every point of observation.

La Fayette and his staff first made their appearance as the vast procession commenced its entrance. A numerous cavalcade of mounted guards then succeeded. These were followed by the two royal carriages, each drawn by six horses, and surrounded by dragoons whose sabres gleamed in the rays of the setting sun. Several regiments of artillery and infantry, in compact order, ensued, and then came a motley mass of three hundred thousand stragglers, men, women, and children, whom the strange event had gathered from all the suburbs of the metropolis.

Almost perfect silence reigned. It was like a procession of the shades of the departed in the spirit land. There was no ringing of bells, no explosion of cannon, no plaudits of the multitude, no bursts of martial bands in requiems or jubilata. The king, humiliated, sunk back in his carriage, and concealed himself as far as possible from observation. The bayonets of the soldiers held in check the ferocious and brutal wretches who would gladly have assailed the monarch with execrations. The same power closed the lips of the Royalists, who would have greeted their sovereign with applause.

Thousands gazed upon the scene in silent sympathy, with their eyes bathed in tears. They loved the cause of constitutional liberty; they wept over the infatuation and folly of the king. The reception was sublime in its appropriateness. No honors were conferred upon the king, for surely he deserved none. No abuse assailed him, for that would but have degraded those who offered it.



RETURN OF THE ROYAL FAMILY FROM VARENNES.

The crowd grew more and more dense as the carriages entered the garden of the Tuileries, and the way became so obstructed by the throng that it was with no little difficulty that a passage was secured. As soon as the carriages arrived at the door of the palace, near the end of the terrace, the royal family alighted and passed through a double file of the National Guard drawn up for their protection. In this hour of misfortune, those who had been most hostile to the despotism of the court vied with each other in their endeavors to protect fallen royalty from indignities. The Viscount of Noailles, a warm friend of reform, and a humane, magnanimous man, approached the queen, who was the last to alight from the carriage, and offered her his arm to conduct her into the palace. The queen, with imprudent but perhaps pardonable pride, haughtily rejected the aid of the

friend of the people, and, seeing one of the partisans of the court near by, asked his arm.

The hall of the Assembly, since destroyed, looked out upon the garden of the Tuileries. The excitement of the hour suspended the sitting, but it was immediately resumed when the king had safely entered the palace. The king seemed perfectly calm. La Fayette, with profound respect and with his sympathies most deeply moved, presented himself at the king's apartment, and, making no allusion to the unprecedented scene which had transpired, said, "Has your majesty any orders to give me?"

"It appears to me," replied the king with a smile, "that I am much more under your orders than you are under mine." The conduct of the queen in this trying hour was peculiarly unfortunate. The royal family then needed every friend it could win. But the queen, losing the control of her passions, seemed to bid defiance to all who were not the partisans of the court, and endeavored to gratify her resentment in goading those she deemed her foes by those taunts of action which are even more exasperating than words.

Assuming that La Fayette was her jailer, she approached that noble patriot, who was willing to shed the last drop of his blood to save her from indignities, and handed him the keys of her trunks. La Fayette, wounded by conduct so ungenerous, and commiserating the condition of the queen, bowed, refusing to receive them, and, in tones saddened by pity and sorrow, declared that no one would think of interfering with her private property.

The unhappy queen so far forgot herself as peevishly to throw the keys into La Fayette's hat, which was upon the table. This was the conduct of a spoiled child. Such was Marie Antoinette. It was this spirit which accelerated her passage to the scaffold. The compassion of La Fayette triumphed over resentment. Overlooking the insult, he calmly replied,

> "Madam, you must pardon me the trouble I give you in returning these keys. I certainly can not touch them."

"Well, then," replied the queen, pettishly, "I shall find other persons less scrupulous than you are."[283]

Such conduct on the part of the queen was ever adding to her unpopularity. The king was much more considerate. Though by no means

equal to the queen in energy, he had a far more comprehensive view of the real attitude of affairs. Had the spirit of the queen been dominant, it is possible that the Revolution in its infancy might have been crushed with an iron hand. All the disciplined armies of Europe were ready to fall upon the unorganized and unarmed populace of France, and to chastise them into submission. Had the moderate and humane spirit of the king prevailed, the Constitution might have been accepted; the king might have been revered and beloved as a constitutional monarch, and France might have passed from despotism to free institutions without bloodshed. But the discordant union of the defiant energies of the one and the yielding moderation of the other rendered ruin inevitable.

The king entered into a brief conversation with La Fayette, in which the devoted patriot said to his monarch,

> "Your majesty is well aware of my attachment to your royal person, but at the same time, you were not ignorant that, if you separated yourself from the cause of the people, I should side with the people."

"This is true," replied the king. "You follow your principles. And I tell you frankly that until lately I had believed you had surrounded me by a turbulent faction of persons of your own way of thinking, but that yours was not the real opinion of France. I have learned during my journey that I was deceived, and that the general wish is in accordance with your views."

The conduct of the Assembly in this momentous crisis, when the liberties of France were so fearfully imperiled, was firm and noble. On the day of the king's return they passed decrees suspending him from his functions, until they should have heard, through a committee of three, the declarations of the king and queen. With that delicacy which had ever, thus far, characterized the action of the Assembly, these decrees were passed in terms of studied decorum, and the king and queen were shielded from answering before the whole Assembly, which would have been required of any offenders of less exalted rank. A guard was placed over the royal family, and was made responsible for its safe custody.[284]

Barnave, covered with the dust of his journey, hastened to the Assembly, and gave the official announcement of the return of the king.

Both the king and the queen had learned to repose great confidence in this noble young man, and Barnave assisted the king in composing the declaration to be presented to the commissioners of the Assembly in extenuation of his flight.[285] The king could hardly have expected that the assertions which he made in this document could be credited by the Assembly. "Never was it my intention," said he, "to leave the kingdom. I had no concert either with foreign powers, or with my relatives, or with any of the French emigrants. I had selected Montmedy, because, being near the frontiers, I should have been better able to oppose every kind of invasion of France, had a disposition been shown to attempt any. One of my principal motives for quitting Paris was to set at rest the argument of my non-freedom, which was likely to furnish occasion for disturbances."

He concluded this declaration in words characteristic of his whole course. "I have ascertained during my journey that public opinion is decidedly in favor of the Constitution. I did not conceive that I could fully judge of this public opinion in Paris. As soon as I had ascertained the general will, I hesitated not, as I have never hesitated, to make a sacrifice of every thing that is personal to me. I will gladly forget all the crosses that I have experienced, if I can but ensure the peace and felicity of the nation."[286]

Thus the king pledged himself anew to support the Constitution. The Assembly received these asseverations in respectful silence, though it was no longer possible for them to give the king credit for sincerity. While the king was thus apologizing, Bouillé, who had fled to the protection of foreign armies, sent a menacing letter to the Assembly, in the name of the allied sovereigns of Europe, containing the following declarations:

> "I know your means of defense," he wrote. "They are nothing; and your chastisement shall be an example to other people. Listen to the words of a man who regards you and your people but with indignation and horror. I know the roads. I will guide the foreign armies which will assail you. There shall not rest one stone upon another in Paris, if you dare to touch a hair of the head of my king."[287]

If Bouillé had wished to provoke the nation to throw down the head of the king as a gauntlet of defiance to the foes of the liberties of France, he could have done nothing more effectual than the utterance of such a menace. Both parties were now preparing vigorously for war. The emigrants at Coblentz, proclaiming that the king was a prisoner, and could no longer have any will of his own, declared monsieur the king's elder brother (Louis XVIII.) to be Regent of France. The most vigorous measures were adopted for accumulating troops and munitions of war for the great invasion.

FOOTNOTES:

279. Marat, who edited "The Friend of the People," was, says Lamartine, "the fury of the Revolution. He had the clumsy tumblings of the brute in his thought and its gnashings of teeth in his style. His journal smelt of blood in every line."—*History of the Girondists*, vol. i., p. 115.

280. The Constitution conferred upon *the king and the Assembly* the right of making peace and war. The king complained bitterly that he was no longer authorized alone to declare war and make peace.

281. Mémoires de Madame de Campan, t. ii., p. 150.

282. "Quiconque applaudira le roi sera bâttonné; quiconque l'insultera sera pendu."

283. La Fayette's Memoirs.

284. Robespierre was opposed to this act of special respect, and exclaimed,

"What means this obsequious exception? Do you fear to degrade royalty by handing over the king and queen to ordinary tribunals? A citizen, a *citoyenne*, any man, any dignity, however elevated, can never be degraded by the law."

285. Thiers, vol. i., p. 185.

286. Even Lamartine says, "The king addressed to the commissioners of the Assembly a reply, the bad faith of which called for the smile rather than the indulgence of his enemies."—*Lamartine's Hist. of the Girondists*, vol. i., p. 105.

"The Assembly accepted the declaration of the king, although it was evident to them that the king did not intend merely to go to Montmedy, where no preparations had been made to receive him, but that he intended to go to the magnificent monastery of Orval, three leagues beyond the frontier, in Luxembourg, then occupied by the Austrians. Troops, commanded by the Prince of Condé, were there awaiting his arrival. The flight of the king was the signal for the loyalist officers to desert. All those of a regiment in garrison at Dunkirk fled to the Austrians, carrying with them the banners of the regiment."—*Hist. de la Rev. Française, par Villiaumé*.

Chapter XXIII.
Commotion in Paris

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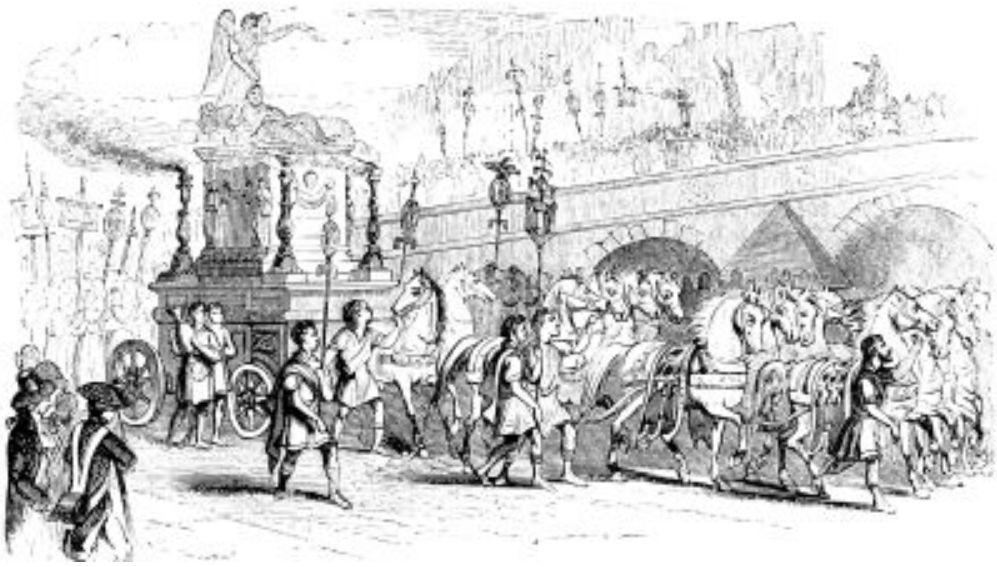
In the midst of these stormy scenes the Assembly voted to remove the remains of Voltaire, which had slumbered for thirteen years in the obscure abbey of Scellières in Champagne, to the Pantheon in Paris. On the 11th of July his coffin was received with great pomp at the barriers, and conducted to a pedestal on the ancient site of the Bastille, constructed from one of the foundation-stones of the fortress. Voltaire had once been imprisoned in that gloomy citadel. Upon the pedestal which supported the coffin were engraved the words

> "Receive on this spot, where despotism once fettered thee, the honors decreed thee by thy country."

The next day a brilliant sun invited the whole population of Paris to the fête. The car which bore the coffin to the Pantheon was drawn by twelve white horses, harnessed four abreast. They were very richly caparisoned, and led by postillions in antique attire. An immense body of cavalry headed the procession. The wail of requiems and the roar of muffled drums blended with the booming of minute guns from the adjacent heights. The sarcophagus was preceded, surrounded, and followed by the National Assembly, the municipal authorities of the city, and by

deputations from all the illustrious and dignified bodies of France. Scholars, laborers, artists, and, conspicuously, all the actors and actresses of Paris, took part in the pageant. Arches, with garlands of leaves and wreaths of roses, spanned the streets. Groups of beautiful girls, dressed in white, carpeted the path with flowers. At intervals, bands of music were placed, saluting the car as it approached with bursts of melody. Before each of the principal theatres the procession stopped, and a hymn was sung in commemoration of the achievements of the great dramatist. It was ten o'clock at night before the immense procession reached the Pantheon. The coffin was deposited between those of Descartes and Mirabeau.



THE REMAINS OF VOLTAIRE TRANSFERRED TO THE PANTHEON.

It was the pen of Voltaire which overthrew despotism in France. It was also the pen of Voltaire which banished for so long from human hearts thoughts of God and of future responsibility. Thus then sprung up, in the place of the despotism he had overthrown, another despotism a thousand fold more terrible. With consummate genius and utter destitution of all moral principle, he was the demon of destruction, sweeping the good and the bad alike into indiscriminate ruin. He could fawn upon the infamous Frederic, and palliate his vices. He was ever ready to bow the knee to the paramours of Louis XV. There was no prostitution of genius which could cause him to blush. The venomous spirit with which he pursued the religion of Christ is fully expressed by his motto, "*Crush the wretch*." The

genius of Voltaire induced France to attempt to establish liberty without religion. The terrific result will probably dissuade from any future repetition of that experiment.

The club of the Jacobins was greatly roused by the moderation of the Assembly, and began to clamor for the entire overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic. On the evening of the 15th of July a meeting of the club was held at which four thousand persons were present. It was a scene of wild enthusiasm. La Fayette, Barnave, and others who were in favor of a constitutional monarchy were denounced as traitors. Robespierre and Danton were the orators of the evening, and they were greeted with thunders of applause. A petition was sent to the Assembly, which assumed the tone of an order, demanding that the king should be deposed as a perfidious traitor to his oaths. It was a meeting of the mob virtually repudiating the Assembly, and assuming for itself both legislative and executive power. The tumultuous gathering was not dispersed until after midnight. Here originated that spirit of lawless violence which subsequently transformed Paris into a field of blood.

On the 16th the commissioners made their report to the Assembly on the flight of the king. Both the commissioners and the Assembly were disposed to be lenient. They were already very anxious in view of popular tumult and menacing anarchy. They had still no wish to overthrow the monarchy and establish a republic. Such a measure would be full of danger to France in its distracted state, and would exasperate a thousand fold the surrounding monarchies. There was no one for whom they wished to exchange their present king. He was the legitimate monarch, which gave him vast power over all the aristocracy of Europe. He had sworn to defend the Constitution, and it was so manifestly for his interest now to consent to be a constitutional monarch that it was hoped that he would sincerely accept that popular cause which would secure for him popular support. Though no one doubted that it had been the intention of the vacillating monarch to throw himself into the midst of foreign armies, and by the aid of their artillery and swords to force the Old Régime again upon France, a very generous report, exculpating the king from blame, was presented and adopted.

Influenced by these views, it was argued that the king had committed no crime. He surely had a right, if he wished, to take a journey to

Montmedy. There was no proof that he intended any thing more, he had violated no law. The Assembly therefore decreed that "in the journey there was nothing culpable."[288]

The Jacobin press now became very bold. "No more king," exclaimed Brissot in the *Patriot*; "let us be Republicans. Such is the cry at the Palais Royal, and it does not gain ground fast enough."

"No king! no protector! no regent!" shouted Fauchet in the *Bouche de Fer* (the Mouth of Iron).

An address was read to the Jacobin Club openly demanding the annihilation of royalty; and though this address was received at first with murmurs—for the majority, even of the Jacobins, were not then prepared for such a step—the new doctrine with marvelous rapidity spread through the lower orders of Paris, and very speedily gained the ascendency in the club. Danton mounted the tribune of the Jacobin Club on the 23d of June, and demanded the forfeiture of the throne. "Your king," said he, "is either a knave or an idiot. If we must have one of the two, who would not prefer the latter?"

The Jacobin Club had now become very formidable. It already numbered eighteen hundred members in Paris alone, each of whom was admitted to its meetings by a ticket. Two hundred and fifty affiliated clubs were scattered throughout the principal cities. It occupied the large chapel of the Convent, and had its president, its secretaries, its tribune, its regular order of business, and its journal, in which its debates and resolutions were published. Many of the ablest members of the Assembly were members of the club, and their most powerful efforts of eloquence were addressed to the club, regarding its voice as beginning to be more potent than that of the Assembly. The Jacobin Club was rapidly becoming the great power of the kingdom, with an excitable mob ever at its disposal as its military arm.

The Journal of the Jacobins, edited by Laclos, a confidant of the Duke of Orleans, overwhelmed the monarch with a torrent of insults and objurgations. Thomas Paine, the notorious reviler of Christianity, was then in Paris, and one of the most violent of the Jacobin Club. He wrote an inflammatory address, which was posted on all the walls of Paris, urging the peremptory dethronement of the king.

The views entertained by La Fayette and the Constitutional Monarchists can not be better conveyed than in the eloquent language of Barnave, in a speech addressed to the Assembly on this occasion.

"I will not dilate," said he, "on the advantages of monarchical government. You have proved your conviction by establishing it in your country. Some men, whose motives I shall not impugn, seeking for examples to adduce, have found in America a people occupying a vast territory with a scanty population, nowhere surrounded by very powerful neighbors, having forests for their boundaries, and having for customs the feelings of a new race, and who are wholly ignorant of those factitious passions and impulses which effect revolutions of government. They have seen a republican government established in that land, and have thence drawn the conclusion that a similar government was suitable for us.

"But if it be true that in our territory there is a vast population; that we have a multitude of men exclusively devoted to those intellectual speculations which excite ambition and the love of fame; that powerful neighbors compel us to form one compact body in order to resist them—if these circumstances are wholly independent of ourselves, then it is undeniable that the sole existing remedy lies in a monarchical government.

"When a country is populous and extensive, there are but two modes of assuring to it a solid and permanent existence. Either you must organize those parts separately, placing in each section of the empire a portion of the government, thus maintaining security at the expense of unity, strength, and all the advantages which result from a great and homogeneous association, or else you will be forced to centralize an unchangeable power, which, never renewed by the law, presenting incessant obstacles to ambition, resists with advantage the shocks, rivalries, and rapid vibrations of an immense population, agitated by all the passions engendered by long-established society.

"These facts decide our position. We can only be strong through a *federative government*, which no one here has the madness to propose, or by a *monarchical government* such as you have established. You have intrusted to an *inviolable* king the exclusive function of naming the agents of his power, but you have made those agents responsible.

"Immense damage is done us when that revolutionary impetus, which has destroyed every thing there was to destroy, and which has urged us to the point where we must at last pause, is perpetuated. The Revolution can not advance one step farther without danger. In the line of *liberty* the first act which follows is the annihilation of royalty. In the line of *equality* the first act which must follow is an attempt on all property. It is time to end the Revolution. It ought to stop when the nation is free, and all men have equal rights. If it continue in trouble it is dishonored, and we with it. Yes! all the world ought to agree that the common interest is involved in now closing the Revolution.

"Those who have lost ought to perceive that it is impossible to make the Revolution retrograde. Those who fashioned the Revolution should see that it has attained its consummation. Kings themselves—if from time to time profound truths can penetrate the councils of kings, if occasionally the prejudices which surround them will permit the sound views of a great and philosophical policy to reach them—kings themselves must learn that there is for them a wide difference between the example of a great reform in government and that of the abolition of royalty; that if we pause here, where we are, they are still kings! But, be their conduct what it may, let the fault come from them and not from us. Regenerators of the empire, follow straightly your undeviating line. You have been courageous and potent—be to-day wise and moderate. In this will consist the glorious termination of your efforts. Then again returning to your domestic hearths you will obtain, if not blessings, at least the silence of calumny."

Though these views of moderation were opposed alike by the aristocrats and the Jacobins, they were accepted with applause by the great majority of the Assembly. Aristocrats and Jacobins now combined to disturb in every possible way the action of the Assembly. They both hoped through tumult and anarchy to march into power. Mobs began to reassemble in the streets of Paris, and cries of treason were uttered against La Fayette and his fellow-constitutionalists. Already in the market-place, at the Palais Royal, and in the hall of the Jacobins, individuals denounced that Constitution as tyrannical which the nation had so recently, with unutterable enthusiasm, sworn to support.[289]

La Fayette, Barnave, the Lameths, Talleyrand, and other illustrious friends of a constitutional monarchy, sent a confidential note to the Emperor of Austria, assuring him that the Constitution conferred as much power upon the king as it was possible now to obtain from the French nation; that any invasion of France by the allies would only exasperate the people, bring the Jacobins into power, endanger the life of the king, and that it could not be successful in restoring the Old Régime. The king was consulted upon this measure, and gave it his approval.[290]

Notwithstanding these warnings, the monarchs of Europe, who were trembling lest the spirit of liberty, rising in France, should undermine their despotic thrones, resolved to crush the patriots beneath the tramp of their dragoons. Leopold of Austria, Frederick William of Prussia, and Count d'Artois, with Bouillé and other of the emigrants, met at Pilnitz, and on the 27th of August signed an agreement that the French Revolution was an "open revolt," "a scandalous usurpation of power," and that all the governments of Europe were bound to unite to abate the nuisance.[291]

The Jacobin Club, it will be remembered, in a stormy midnight debate, had drawn up a petition to the Assembly demanding the deposition of the king as a perjured traitor. They wished, by a demonstration of popular enthusiasm, to terrify the Assembly into obedience to their mandate. Accordingly, the whole populace of Paris were summoned to meet on the Field of Mars, to sign, with much parade, the petition on the Altar of Federation, which had not yet been taken down.

At an early hour on the morning of the 17th of July the multitude began to congregate. It was the Sabbath-day. Every scene in the drama of the Revolution seems to have been arranged on the sublimest scale. Soon from fifty to one hundred thousand, including the lowest of the population of Paris, were thronging the field, and clambering over the gigantic altar.[292] Two men were seized, under the absurd accusation that they were intending to blow up the altar and all upon it by means of a barrel of gunpowder. The cry of "Aristocrats!" which passed like a tornado through the crowd, precluded any trial, and settled their doom. The two unhappy men were literally torn to pieces, and their heads were borne about on pikes by brutal wretches who were now beginning to emerge from dens of obscurity into confidence and power.

The rumor of these murders and of the threatening attitude of the mob spread through the city and reached the ears of the Assembly. The principal ringleaders of the Jacobins were nowhere to be found, and it was asserted and generally believed that they were in a secret place, that they might escape responsibility, while, through their agents, they were rousing the mob to a demonstration which should overawe the Assembly. In the midst of the wildest imaginable scene of tumult and uproar, the *mandate* of the Jacobins—for it could with no propriety be called a *petition*—was placed upon the altar upon many separate sheets of paper, and speedily received six thousand signatures. This was a new order, drawn up at the moment, for the original document could not be found. It read as follows:

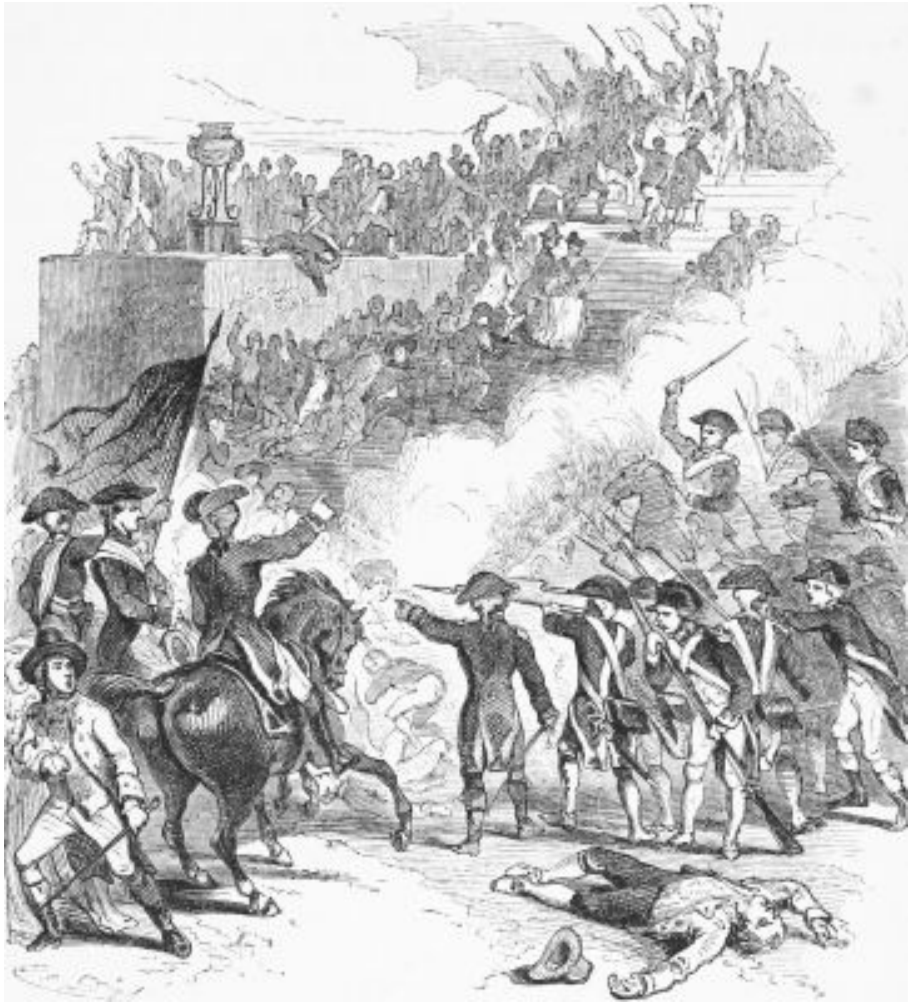
> "Representatives of the people! your labors are nearly ended. A great crime has been committed. Louis has fled, abandoning his post. The country is on the verge of ruin. The king has been arrested, brought back to Paris, and the people demand that he be tried. You declare that he shall be king. The people do not wish it, and therefore annul your decree. The king has been carried off by the two hundred and ninety-two *aristocrats* who have themselves declared that they have no longer a voice in the National Assembly. Your decree is annulled, because it is in opposition to the voice of the people, your sovereign. Repeal it. The king has abdicated by crime. Receive his abdication."

Nothing could be more execrable than this usurpation of authority by the mob. The Assembly was composed of the representatives of twenty-five millions of people, acting under the calm deliberation which the forms of law exacted. And here six thousand men, women, and boys, belched forth perhaps from the dens of infamy in Paris, and arming themselves with a mob of fifty thousand of the most degraded of the populace of a great city, assumed to be *the nation*—the law makers and the law executors of the kingdom of France.[293]

The municipality ordered La Fayette, with a detachment of the National Guard, to proceed to the scene of tumult and disperse the rioters. The moment the soldiers appeared they were received with hisses, shouts,

and a shower of stones from the populace. Several of the stones struck La Fayette, and he narrowly escaped death from a pistol-shot fired at him. The attitude of the mob was so threatening that La Fayette retired for a stronger force. He soon returned, accompanied by Bailly, the mayor of the city, and all the municipal authorities, and followed by ten thousand of the National Guard. The red flag, which proclaimed that the city was placed under martial law, was now floating from the Hôtel de Ville. The tramp of ten thousand men,[294] with the rolling of artillery and the beating of four hundred drums, arrested the attention of the throng. The troops, debouching by three openings which intersected the glacis, were, as by magic, drawn up facing the throng. M. Bailly, upon horseback, displayed the red flag, in accordance with the Riot Act law, and ordered the mob to disperse.[295]

The response was a shout from fifty thousand men, women, and boys of "Down with the red flag! Down with Bailly! Death to La Fayette!" The clamor became hideous, and a shower of mud and stones fell upon La Fayette and the mayor, and several pistol-shots from a distance were discharged at them. The crowd, accustomed to lawlessness, did not believe that the municipal government would dare to order the soldiers to fire.



PUBLICATION OF MARTIAL LAW ON THE FIELD OF MARS, JULY 17, 1791.

La Fayette, with mistaken humanity, ordered the advance guard to fire into the air. The harmless volley was followed by shouts of derision and defiance. It now became necessary to give the fatal order. One volley swept the field. The crash was followed by a shriek, as four hundred dead or wounded fell upon the plain, and as the smoke passed away the whole tumultuous mass was seen flying in terror over the embankments and through the avenues. The artillerymen, with the coolness of trained soldiers, were just upon the point of opening their fire of grapeshot upon the panic-stricken fugitives, when La Fayette, unable to make his voice heard through the uproar, heroically threw himself before the cannon, and thus saved the lives of thousands. The National Guard, saddened by the performance of a duty as painful as it was imperious, returned in the evening through the dark streets of Paris and dispersed to their homes.[296]

The next day M. Bailly appeared before the Assembly, and, in terms of dignity and manly sorrow, reported the triumph of the law. Both the National Assembly and the municipality of Paris voted their cordial approval of the conduct of Bailly and La Fayette. The Jacobin press, however, gave utterance to the fiercest invectives. Bailly and La Fayette were denounced as murderers, and every effort was made to exasperate the passions of the populace.

Amid such scenes of agitation and violence the Assembly concluded its task of forming a constitution. The important document, which was but partially finished at the great celebration on the 14th of July, 1790, was now completed. None were, however, fully satisfied with the Constitution. The aristocratic party abhorred the democratic spirit with which it was pervaded, and yet wished to make it still more obnoxiously democratic, that monarchical Europe might be more thoroughly exasperated. The Jacobins held it up to derision and execration because it was not democratic enough. The moderate party, represented by such men as La Fayette and Barnave, wished to invest the king with more power, but dared not attempt any revision of the Constitution, with the aristocrats and the Jacobins both ready to combine against them.

Napoleon was at this time a young officer in the army, twenty-three years of age. His brother Joseph was studying law in Italy. The whole family had warmly espoused the popular cause. From the beginning Napoleon was the ardent advocate of equal rights, and the determined foe of mob violence. At this early period of the Revolution, he expressed the views to which he adhered through the whole of his career.

There was about this time a large party given by M. Necker. All the illustrious men and women of Paris were present. The youthful Napoleon, then quite a boy in appearance, and almost a stranger in Paris, was introduced to this brilliant assembly by his friend the Abbé Raynal. The genius of Napoleon, and his commanding conversational eloquence, soon drew around him quite a group.

"Who is that young man," inquired the proud Alfieri, "who has collected such a group around him?"

"He is," replied the abbé, "a protégé of mine, and a young man of extraordinary talent. He is very industrious, well read, and has made remarkable attainments in history, mathematics, and all military science."

The Bishop of Autun commended the soldiers for having refused to obey their officers, who had ordered them, on a certain occasion, by a discharge of musketry, to disperse a mob.

"Excuse me, my lord," said Napoleon, in tones of earnestness which arrested general attention, "if I venture to interrupt you, but, as I am an officer, I must claim the privilege of expressing my sentiments. It is true that I am young, and it may appear presumptuous in me to address so many distinguished men. But during the past three years I have paid intense attention to our political troubles. I see with sorrow the state of our country, and I will incur censure rather than pass unnoticed principles which are not only unsound, but which are subversive of all government.

"As much as any I desire to see all abuses, antiquated privileges, and usurped rights annulled. Nay, as I am at the commencement of my career, it will be my best policy, as well as my duty, to support the progress of popular institutions, and to promote reform in every branch of the public administration. But as, in the last twelve months, I have witnessed repeated alarming popular disturbances, and have seen our best men divided into factions which threaten to be irreconcilable, I sincerely believe that now, *more than ever*, a strict discipline in the army is absolutely necessary for the safety of our constitutional government and for the maintenance of order.

"Nay, if our troops are not compelled unhesitatingly to obey the commands of the executive, we shall be exposed to the blind fury of democratic passions which will render France the most miserable country on the globe. The ministry may be assured that, if the daily-increasing arrogance of the Parisian mob is not repressed by a strong arm and social order rightly maintained, we shall see not only this capital but every other city in France thrown into a state of indescribable anarchy, while the real friends of liberty, the enlightened patriots now working for the best good of our country, will sink beneath a set of demagogues who, with louder cries for freedom on their tongues, will be in reality but a horde of savages, worse than the Neros of old."[297]

The whole future career of Napoleon was in consistency with the spirit of these remarks. "I frankly declare," said Napoleon, subsequently, "that if

I were compelled to choose between the old monarchy and Jacobin misrule, I should infinitely prefer the former."

On the 3d of September the Constitution was presented to the king for his acceptance with imposing ceremonies.[298] At nine o'clock in the evening a deputation left the chamber of the Assembly, and, escorted by a numerous and brilliant guard of honor, entered the Chateau of the Tuileries. The multitudes who thronged the way applauded loudly. The king, surrounded by his ministers and other high officers of the kingdom, received the deputation in his council-chamber. M. Thouret, president of the commission, presented the Constitution to the king, saying,

> "Sire! the representatives of the nation come to present to your majesty the constitutional act which consecrates the indefeasible rights of the French people, which gives to the throne its true dignity, and regenerates the government of the empire."

The king, with a countenance expressive of satisfaction, received the document, and replied that he would examine it, and, after the shortest possible delay, communicate his decision to the Assembly. On the 13th he sent a message to the Assembly, which Barnave had assisted him in drawing up, and which contained the following conciliatory and noble sentiments:

> "I have examined the Constitution. I accept it and will carry it into execution. The will of the people is no longer doubtful to me, and therefore I accept the Constitution. I freely renounce the co-operation I had claimed in this work, and I declare that when I have renounced it no other but myself has any right to claim it. Let the absent who are restrained by the fear of persecutions return to their country in safety. Let us consent to a mutual forgiveness of the past and obliterate all accusations arising from the events of the Revolution in a general reconciliation. I do not refer to those which have been caused by an attachment to me. Can you see any guilt in them? I will present myself to-morrow at noon to the National Assembly,

> and take oath to the Constitution in the very place where it has been drawn up."

This frank and cordial assent was unanticipated. It created a burst of extraordinary joy. La Fayette, in response to the suggestion of the king, immediately proposed a general amnesty for all acts connected with the Revolution. The motion was carried by acclaim. For a moment all parties seemed again to be united, prisons were thrown open, captives liberated, and shouts of fraternity and happiness resounded through Paris.

The next day the king went to the Assembly and took his seat by the side of the president. He was received by all the members standing, and they remained standing while he addressed them. With the most earnest expression of sincerity and satisfaction, the king said,

> "I come to consecrate solemnly here the acceptance I have given to the Constitutional Act. I swear to be faithful to the nation and the law, and to employ all the powers delegated to me for maintaining the Constitution and carrying its decrees into effect. May this great and memorable epoch be that of the re-establishment of peace, and become the gage of the happiness of the people and the prosperity of the empire."

As the king withdrew the whole Assembly enthusiastically escorted him to his palace. But it was a bitter trial for the once absolute monarch to lay aside his unlimited power and become a constitutional king. The monarch, though feeling humiliated, was still enabled to maintain his aspect of smiles and composure until he reached the privacy of his own apartment. He then threw himself into a chair, and, losing all control, burst into tears.[299] A weeping king excites universal sympathy. The heroic struggles of twenty millions of people to gain their liberties also secure the sympathy and the admiration of every noble heart.

On the 18th of November the Constitution was proclaimed in the streets of Paris. Every thing was done which art could devise to invest the scene with splendor.

PROCLAMATION OF THE CONSTITUTION IN THE MARKET-PLACE.

Paris was again in a delirium of joy. The bells rang, salvos of artillery were fired, and the acclamations of hundreds of thousands, blending with peals of music from martial bands, filled the air with a confusion of all the sounds of exultation. The people were never weary of calling the king, the queen, the children, to the windows of the palace, and whenever they appeared they were greeted with outbursts of love and joy.[300]

On the 18th there was another magnificent festival on the Field of Mars. The Constitution was read to the people. It was accepted by them with the simultaneous shout from three hundred thousand voices of "*Vive la Nation! Vive le Roi!*" No discordant cry was heard. "After the tempest, those who have been beaten by it, as well as those who have not suffered, enjoy in common the serenity of the sky." In the evening Paris and all France blazed with illuminations and resounded with the shout of

enfranchised millions. Balloons rose, from which copies of the Constitution were scattered as snow-flakes upon the multitude. The Elysian Fields, from the Arc de l'Etoile to the Tuileries, was brilliant with garlands and stars and pyramids of flame. Every tree blazed with quivering tongues of fire. Majestic orchestras pealed forth the notes of national triumph, and a multitude which no man could number filled that most magnificent avenue of Europe with plays, dances, shouts, and songs of exultation.

La Fayette, on his well-known white charger, rode at the head of his staff through the almost impenetrable throng, accompanied by the king, the queen, and their children. Enthusiasm now reached its culminating point. Hats were thrown into the air, and from the whole mighty mass, as by electric sympathy, rose the cry "*Vive le Roi! Vive la Reine! Vive le Dauphin!*"

The king and queen were overjoyed in view of the happiness of the people, and of the love thus spontaneously and enthusiastically manifested for the royal family. The queen was bewildered by so marvelous a change. But four weeks before the royal family were conducted as captives through that same avenue, surrounded by the same countless throng, and not a voice bade them welcome. They could then read in every eye the expression of hatred and defiance. The contrast led the queen to exclaim, "They are no longer the same people." Even her proud heart was touched, and she, for the first time, began to feel some respect for popular rights. Returning to the palace, of her own accord she stepped out upon the balcony, and presented her children to the crowd who thronged the terrace. They received such greeting as can only come from hearts glowing with sincerity and joy. These days of rejoicing were terminated by an offering of thanksgiving to God, as the sublime chant of the *Te Deum* was sung in the cathedral of Nôtre Dame.

The Constituent Assembly, having now completed its task, prepared to dissolve. As a conclusive reply to all who had accused it of ambitious designs to perpetuate its powers, and as a magnanimous display of patriotic disinterestedness, it decreed that none of its members should be re-eligible to the next Legislature.

At three o'clock in the afternoon of the 30th of September, the king, surrounded by his ministers, entered the Assembly. He was no longer the

hostage of the nation, but its recognized sovereign; the guard which the law assigned him being now placed under his own command. Upon his entrance the applause was so enthusiastic and prolonged that for some time he was unable to commence speaking. He then said,

> "Gentlemen, after the completion of the Constitution, you have resolved on to-day for the termination of your labors. I will exercise all the power confided to me in assuring to the Constitution the respect and obedience which is its due. For you, gentlemen, who, during a long and painful career, have evinced an indefatigable zeal in your labors, there remains a last duty to fulfill, when you are scattered over the face of the empire. It is to enlighten your fellow-citizens as to the spirit of the laws you have made; to purify and unite opinions by the example you will give to the love of order and submission to the laws. Be, on your return to your homes, the interpreters of my sentiments to your fellow-citizens. Tell them that the king will always be their first and most faithful friend; that he desires to be loved by them, and can only be happy with them and by them."

The king left the hall amid the loudest acclamations. They were the last with which he was greeted. Thouret, the president of the Assembly, as soon as the king had retired, said in a loud voice, "The Constituent Assembly pronounces its mission accomplished, and that its sittings now terminate." Thus closed the truly patriotic Assembly. It had accomplished the greatest and the most glorious revolution ever achieved in so short a time, and with so little violence. Repressing alike the despotism of aristocracy and the lawlessness of the mob, it established a constitution containing the essential elements of liberty protected by law. Under this constitution France might have advanced in prosperity. But the aristocrat and the Jacobin combined in its overthrow. They were fatally successful in their efforts.

It is interesting to observe how differently the same events were regarded by different minds. Bertrand de Moleville, a warm partisan of the aristocracy, says,

> "Thus terminated this guilty Assembly, whose vanity, ambition, cupidity, ingratitude, ignorance, and audacity have overturned the most ancient and the noblest monarchy of Europe, and rendered France the theatre of every crime, of every calamity, and of the most horrible catastrophe. Can these treacherous representatives ever justify themselves in the eyes of the nation for having so unworthily abused their confidence and their powers?"

On the other hand, the democratic historians, the "Two Friends of Liberty," while regretting that the Constitution was not more thoroughly democratic, say,

> "The Constitution of 1791, with all its faults, forever deserves the gratitude of the French people, because it has destroyed, never to return, every trace of feudalism, imposts the most fatal to agriculture, the privileges of particular persons, the usurpations of the priesthood over the civil power, and the proud pretensions of ancient corporations; because it has realized what philosophy for ages has in vain wished, and what monarchs the most absolute have never dared to undertake; and because it has established that uniformity which no one could have ever hoped for in an empire formed by gradual accretions from time to time, and with which, under a good government, there is no prosperity which France may not realize."

But whatever may be the estimate which political partisans may place upon the labors of the Assembly, no intelligent man will now deny that the great majority of that body were true patriots, sincerely desiring the welfare of their country. It will be admitted by all that they abolished judicial torture, placed all men upon the basis of equality in the eye of the law, annulled obnoxious privileges, introduced vast reform into commercial jurisprudence, established liberty of worship and of conscience, suppressed monastic vows, abolished the execrable system of *lettres de cachet*, rendered personal liberty sacred, introduced equality of

taxation, and swept away those provincial jealousies and that interior line of custom-houses which had for ages seriously embarrassed the internal trade of the kingdom. All feudal rights were abrogated, industry encouraged, and the citizens of the kingdom were enrolled into a National Guard, for the preservation of domestic peace and to resist aggression.

This most noble reform combined Europe assailed with all its marshaled bayonets. The crime deluged the Continent in woe. After nearly a quarter of a century of conflagration and carnage, French liberty was trampled into the bloody mire of Waterloo, and the Old Régime was reinstated.

FOOTNOTES:

287. "Je connais vos moyens de defense; ils sont nul. Et votre châtiment servira d'exemple aux autres peuples. Voilà ce que voit vous dire un homme qui n'a pour vous et votre peuple qu'indignation et horreur. Je connais les chemins; je guiderais les armées étrangères qui vous attaqueront. Si l'on ôte un seul cheven de la tête de mon roi, il ne restera pas pièrre sur pièrre à Paris. Adieu, messieurs."—*Histoire de la Revolution Française, par Villaumé*, p. 160.

288. The Assembly, while exonerating the king, condemned Bouillé and three *Guards du Corps* who accompanied the king in his flight. It is impossible to refute the *logic* with which Robespierre opposed this decision. "The measures you propose," he said, "can not but dishonor you. If you adopt them, I demand to declare myself the advocate of *all* the accused. I will be the defender of the three *Guards du Corps*, the governess, even of Monsieur de Bouillé. By the principles of your committee, *no crime has been committed*. Where there is no crime *there can be no accomplices*. Gentlemen, to visit the weaker culprit when the greater one escapes is cowardice. You must condemn all or acquit all." To this no reply was made. The Assembly voted.

289. "The Republican party now began to appear. The struggle, which lay at first between the Assembly and the court, then between the Constitutionalists and the aristocrats, was now about to commence between the Constitutionalists and the Republicans."—*Mignet*, p. 104.

290. Villiaumé, p. 112; Desodoards, p. 42.

291. Hist. de la Rev. Fr., par Villiaumé, p. 112. "The Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, and the Count d'Artois met at Pilnitz, where they made the famous declaration of the 27th of August, which, far from improving the condition of the king, would have imperiled him, had not the Assembly, in its wisdom, continued to follow out its new designs, regardless at once of the clamors of the multitude at home and of the foreign powers."—*Mignet*, p. 107.

292. Histoire des Montagnards, par Alphonse Esquiros, p. 49.

293. "It is easy to discern how many a hasty and tremulous hand has traced the witness of its fury or ignorance upon this document. Many were even unable to write. A circle of ink with a cross in the centre marks their anonymous adhesion to the petition. Some female names are to

be seen, and numerous names of children are discernible from the inaccuracy of their hand, guided by another."—*History of the Girondists, Lamartine*, vol. i., p. 125.

This document is still preserved in the archives of the municipality of Paris. On it may be read the names of Chaumette, Maillard, Hebert, Hauriot, Santerre, and others who subsequently became most conspicuous in deeds of cruelty and infamy.

294. History of the Girondists, Lamartine, vol. i., p. 126.

295. The Riot Act established by the Constitution was a great improvement upon the Riot Act of England. It declared that the municipal officers, if the public peace is endangered, shall declare that military force must be produced; and the signal of this declaration shall be a red flag upon the Hôtel de Ville, and then carrying before them a red flag through the streets, wherever they, with their armed force, go. On the appearance of the red flag, all crowds refusing instantly to disperse shall be held criminal, and shall be liable to be dispersed by force. In a crowd a *voice* can not always be heard, but a *red flag* can always be seen. The crowd, though thus dispersed, were authorized to depute six persons to state their grievance to the government.

296. There are many conflicting partisan accounts of this event. The most careful and thorough investigation has led me to the statement given above. When the Jacobins came into power they sent Bailly to the guillotine for this noble deed. La Fayette would have perished with him had he not been sheltered in the dungeons of Olmutz. Bailly, in his narrative of this affair, says that there were but twelve killed and about as many wounded.

297. The narrative of this interview is given in full in Chambers' Edinburgh Journal. It was communicated to that journal by an Italian gentleman, a pupil of Condorcet, who was present on the occasion.

298. The Constitution was commenced the 17th of June, 1789, and completed the 3d of September, 1791.

299. Madame Campan's Memoirs, vol. ii., p. 157.

300. All contemporary history unites in testifying to the enthusiasm displayed on this occasion.

Chapter XXIV.
The Approach of War

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Sentiments of the King and Queen upon the Constitution.—The Legislative Assembly.—Its democratic Spirit.—The King's Speech.—Painful Scene.—The Queen plans Escape.—Riot in the Theatre.—Infatuation of the Aristocrats.—Insult to the Duke of Orleans.—Embarrassment of the Allies.—Replies to the King from the European Powers.—The Emigrants at Coblentz.—The King's Veto.—Letters of the King to his Brothers.—Their Replies.—Cruel Edicts.—Pétion chosen Mayor.—The King visits the Assembly.—Rise of the Republican Party.

The monarch of France, though deprived of absolute power, was still in the enjoyment of extensive prerogatives. The Assembly had conferred upon him the title of King of the French, an annual income of five millions of dollars, the command of the armies, and the right of suspending the national decrees. The king and queen were probably at this time sincere in their resolve to be resigned to the change, and to accept the Constitution. In the first interview which Bertrand de Moleville, a Royalist whom the king had appointed Minister of Marine, had with the king, the following remarks were made by the monarch

> "In my opinion the Constitution has serious defects, and if I had been at liberty to address some observations to the Assembly, very beneficial reforms might have resulted from them. But now it is too late, and I have accepted it, such as it is. I have sworn to cause it to be executed, and I ought to be, and will be, strictly faithful to my oath."

"But may I be permitted," inquired the minister, "to ask your majesty if the queen's opinion on this point agrees with the king's?"

"Yes, precisely," said the king; "she will tell you so herself."

"I went down stairs," continues Bertrand de Moleville in his interesting narrative, "to the queen, who, after declaring with extreme kindness that she, as well as the king, felt under much obligation to me for having accepted the ministry under such critical circumstances, added these words:

"'The king has acquainted you with his intentions relative to the Constitution. Do you think that the only plan he has to follow is to adhere to his oath?'

"'Most certainly, madam,' I replied.

"'Well, then,' said the queen, 'be assured that nothing shall induce us to change. Come, M. Bertrand, courage! I hope that with patience, firmness, and perseverance, all is not yet lost.'"[301]

Just before the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, elections had been held, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, to choose the first *Legislative Assembly*. This legislature was to be renewed every two years. No member of the Constitutional Assembly was eligible. The Legislative Assembly, consequently, was composed mostly of obscure men with but little political experience. They numbered seven hundred and forty-five.

The Legislative Assembly was convened the 1st day of October, the day after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, and in the hall which had been occupied by that body.[302] At its first sitting it was observed that the exterior aspect of the Assembly had greatly changed; that nearly all the white heads had disappeared; and that France had fallen into the hands of young men. Sixty of the deputies were under twenty-six years of age. The spirit of the new Assembly was developed in its first decrees. A deputation was sent to inform the king that the Assembly was organized. The president of the deputation, in conformity with court etiquette, approached the king, and, when at four paces distance, bowed and said,

"Sire, the Assembly is formed, and has deputed us to inform your majesty."

Upon reporting the result of their mission, some of the deputies were offended that the ancient titles of royalty had been retained.

"I demand," cried one, "that this title of *majesty* be no longer employed."

"I demand," exclaimed another, "that this title of *Sire* be abolished. It is only an abbreviation of Seigneur, which recognizes a sovereignty in the man to whom it is given. There is no other majesty here than that of the law and the people. Let us leave the king no other title than that of King of the French."

In the room there was a gilded chair, raised above the seat of the president, which was occupied by the king when he attended the Assembly. It had always been a respectful custom for the members to remain uncovered when the king was present, and to stand while he addressed them. It was the custom for the king, in addressing the Assembly, to be seated and to wear his hat.

"Let this scandalous gilded chair be removed," another said. "Let an equality exist between us and the king as regards ceremony. When he is uncovered and standing, let us stand and uncover our heads. When he is covered and seated, let us sit and wear our hats."

These decrees, abolishing the respect due to rank, and the courtesies so essential to mitigate the ferocity of political strife, were promptly passed. The Constitutional party throughout France were generally mortified and alarmed, and the king was deeply wounded. He declared that the Constitution did not require of him to expose the monarchical dignity to insult, and that he would not preside at the opening of the legislative body in person, but would assign the duty to his ministers.[303] Alarmed by the decision of the king and by the indications of public disapproval, the Assembly, after a debate of two days, repealed the obnoxious decrees.

The Jacobins regarded the repeal as a defeat, and in the Assembly, in their clubs, and in their journals, did what they could to rouse the indignation of the populace. The royalist journals also united with them in the attempt to overwhelm this return to moderation with derision. "See," they cried, "how contemptible is this revolution; how conscious of its own weakness. See, in two days, how often it has given itself the lie." The Royalists still persisted in their endeavor to goad the revolutionary party to every conceivable outrage, that Europe might be more effectually roused to crush the Revolution.[304]

On the 7th the king proceeded to the Assembly. He was received, apparently, with unanimous applause, some shouting energetically "*Vive le Roi!*" and others, still more energetically, "*Vive sa majesté!*" The king's speech was conciliatory, and was received with warm approval. The members of the Assembly, however, retained their seats while the king was addressing them. Louis regarded this as an insult, and it wounded him most keenly.

The queen attended the sitting in a private box. The disrespect with which the king was treated pierced her very soul. She sat as in a stupor of silence, her countenance, pallid and wan, betraying the bitterness of her anguish. The king, upon leaving the Assembly, hastened immediately to the private apartment of the queen. He was so pale and agitated that the queen uttered an exclamation of surprise. The unhappy monarch threw himself upon a sofa, and, pressing a handkerchief to his eyes, said,

"All is lost! Ah! madam, and you are witness to this humiliation. What! you are come to France to see—"

"These words," writes Madame Campan, "were interrupted by sobs. The queen threw herself upon her knees before him, and pressed him in her arms. I remained with them, not from any blamable curiosity, but from a stupefaction which rendered me incapable of determining what I ought to do. The queen said to me, '*Oh go, go*,' with an accent which expressed, 'Do not remain to witness the dejection and despair of your sovereign.' I withdrew, struck with the contrast between the shouts of joy without the palace, and the profound grief which oppressed the sovereigns within."

The queen resolved immediately to leave Paris and to return to her friends in Vienna, that from the heart of Austria she might plan for the recovery of the throne. The king so far fell in with this plan as to write a letter which M. Goguelat was to take to the emperor. During the whole day the garden and court-yard of the Tuileries were thronged, and the rejoicing shouts of the people filled the air. The ignorant populace, believing that the king and the queen shared their joy, called loudly for them to take an airing in their carriage in the Elysian Fields. It was not deemed prudent to decline. With heavy hearts they entered their carriage, and rode slowly along the magnificent avenue, escorted by the officers of the Parisian army. Here a new insult awaited them. Though they were repeatedly greeted with shouts of "*Vive le Roi!*" a gigantic man, with stentorian voice,

kept near the carriage window, ever interrupting those shouts with the cry, "*No, don't believe them. Vive la Nation!*" This one ill-omened voice, incessantly reiterated, sank deep into their hearts, and obliterated all impressions of public acclaim. In the deepest dejection they returned to the palace.[305]

That night Paris blazed with illuminations, and the shouts of joyful revelry filled all the streets; but in these resounding plaudits the queen heard but the death-knell of the monarchy, and, in the retirement of her boudoir, she was at midnight planning her escape from France.

It was deemed by the king and queen of the utmost importance to assume publicly the appearance of content. A few evenings after this, the royal family attended the Théâtre Italien. As Madame Duguzon sang the words, "*Ah! how I love my mistress*," she turned to the royal box, and gracefully courtesied to the queen. Immediately many Jacobins in the pit shouted, "No mistress! no master! liberty!" This caused others to shout, "Long live the king! long live the queen!" Still more energetically the Jacobins replied, "No king! no queen!" In an instant the theatre was thrown into a Babel of tumult. The infuriated antagonists from words proceeded to blows, and a fierce fight took place under the eyes of the royal family. News of the affray spread rapidly through Paris, and the excitable mob was rapidly gathering, when the royal guards surrounded the king and queen and bore them safely to the palace. This was the last time the royal family ventured into the theatre.[306]

The queen was all this time carrying on a private correspondence with the foreign powers in cipher, and through her agents was conferring with William Pitt in London. "The queen told me," writes Madam Campan, "that her secret envoy was returned from London, and that all he had been able to wring from Pitt, whom he found alarmingly reserved, was, that *he would not suffer the French monarchy to fall*; that to suffer the revolutionary spirit to erect an organized republic in France would be a great error as regarding the tranquillity of Europe."[307]

The queen complained that she herself was greatly embarrassed by the arrogance of the nobles. "When I do any thing," she said to Madame Campan, "which the *noblesse* do not like, I am treated with marked

neglect. No one will come to my card-parties, and the king is left in solitude."[308]

The Royalists, indeed, seem to have been abandoned to utter infatuation. They did every thing in their power to insult and exasperate those who were not their political confederates. The Duke of Orleans went to the Tuileries to attend the king's levee. The courtiers who thronged the anterooms, as soon as he entered, crowded around him, hustled him about, trod on his toes, and punched him with their elbows. "Gentlemen," they shouted to each other, "watch the dishes!" implying that the duke was provided with poison to sprinkle upon the refreshments. The duke was at last compelled to retire without seeing the royal family. The crowd followed him to the staircase, and, as he descended, spit upon him, covering his head and clothes with saliva. The duke supposed, though erroneously, that the king and queen instigated this unpardonable outrage. It is not strange that this man, when his hour of power came, voted to send the king to the guillotine.[309]

The queen was unrelenting in her hostility to La Fayette, and often treated him with the most irritating rudeness. "Her aversion," says Madame Campan, "for the general increased daily, and grew so powerful that when, toward the end of the Revolution, he seemed willing to support the tottering throne she could never bring herself to incur so great an obligation to him."[310] On one occasion La Fayette met the queen in a private interview, while his aids waited for him in the saloon. Some of the ladies of the court, to insult La Fayette and his aids, said loudly, "*It is very alarming to see the queen alone with a rebel and a brigand*."

The feelings of the king were now so outraged that he could not cheerfully persevere in his resolves to maintain the new order of affairs. The allied sovereigns were, however, so embarrassed by the acceptance of the Constitution by the king, and by the reiterated declaration of the king that he accepted and adopted the whole system of governmental reform, that they hesitated for a time to carry into execution the declaration of Pilnitz. Louis XVI. notified all the courts of Europe of the change which had been introduced into the government of France, and sent to them all, with much ceremonial pomp, a copy of the Constitution elegantly engrossed upon satin paper. The allies could no longer pretend that they

were waging war against a *revolted people*. It was now necessary, if they continued hostile, to assail the legitimate king, and to deny, in the face of the world, that the government of France had any right to mitigate the severity of its despotism.

The courts of Europe were quite bewildered by the new aspect which affairs thus assumed. It was necessary for them to take some notice of the courteous communication which had been transmitted to them. Leopold of Austria seemed disposed to give up the conflict, thinking that the safety of his sister Marie Antoinette would be promoted by peace. He therefore returned a pacific answer. Prussia and England sent back courteous replies with assurances of their amicable intentions. Holland, the Italian principalities, and Switzerland assumed a friendly attitude. Russia was cold, haughty, and reserved. Gustavus of Sweden returned the insulting reply that the King of France was a prisoner, and that his assent to the Constitution was obtained upon compulsion, and therefore deserved no respect from the foreign powers.[311] The Electors of Treves and of Mentz, in whose territories the emigrants had mostly taken refuge, returned evasive and unsatisfactory replies. Spain, also, while declaring that she had no wish to disturb the internal tranquillity of France, could not conceal her displeasure that free institutions were established so near her borders.

The emigrants, however, were still rallying at Coblentz and making formidable preparations for war. The king was vacillating. It is certain that he sent, apparently, the most sincere injunctions to the emigrants at Coblentz to disband and to return to France, accepting the new order of things. It is equally certain that he kept up a private correspondence with the emigrants, encouraging them to persevere and to march to his rescue.[312]

This hostile gathering at Coblentz, ever threatening the kingdom with invasion, kept France in a continual state of ferment. The Minister of War reported to the Assembly that nineteen hundred of the officers of the army had deserted their posts and joined the menacing foe. After a long and very anxious debate, a decree was passed declaring that the French emigrants assembled at Coblentz were believed to be conspiring against France; that if, on the 1st of January next, they still continued assembled, they should be declared guilty of conspiracy, prosecuted as such, and punished with

death; and that the revenues of those who refused to comply with this decree should be levied, during their lives, for the benefit of the nation, without prejudice to the rights of wives, children, and lawful creditors.[313]

The king, on the 10th of November, returned this law with his *veto*. It was an imposing scene. All the ministers of the king, in a body, went to the Assembly. It was generally understood that the power of the *veto* was to be exercised. Breathless silence pervaded the Assembly. The bill was returned to the president with the official formula, "*The king will examine it*." Loud murmurs immediately rose from all parts of the house, and the ministers retired, leaving the Assembly in deep irritation. The conviction was strengthened that the king was in sympathy with the conspirators.

To efface this impression the king the next day issued a proclamation to the emigrants exhorting them to cease to harass France by their threatening attitude, and like good citizens to return and respect the established laws of their country. He entreated them not to compel him to employ severe measures against them. As to the charge that he was deprived of his liberty, he said that the *veto* which he had just interposed in their favor was sufficient proof of the freedom of his actions. At the same time he published two very decisive letters to his two brothers. To Louis he wrote as follows:

"Paris, November 11, 1791.

> "To Louis Stanislas Xavier, French Prince, the King's Brother, —I wrote to you, my brother, on the 16th of October last, and you ought not to have had any doubt of my real sentiments. I am surprised that my letter has not produced the effect which I had a right to expect from it. In order to recall you to your duty I have used all the arguments that ought to touch you most. Your absence is a pretext for all the evil disposed; a sort of excise for all the deluded French, who imagine that they are serving me by keeping all France in an alarm and agitation, which are the torment of my life.
>
> "The Revolution is finished. The Constitution is completed. France wills it; I will maintain it. Upon its consolidation now depends the welfare of the monarchy. The

> Constitution has conferred rights upon you; it has attached to them one condition which you ought to lose no time in fulfilling. Believe me, brother, and repel the doubts which pains are taken to excite in you respecting my liberty. I am going to prove to you, by a most solemn act, and in a circumstance which interests you, that I can act freely. Prove to me that you are my brother and a Frenchman by complying with my entreaties. Your proper place is by my side; your interests, your sentiments alike urge you to come and resume it. I invite you, and, if I may, I order you to do so.
>
> (Signed), Louis."

In a similar strain he wrote to his brother Charles. But neither the proclamation to the emigrants nor the letters to his brothers produced any effect. The Count of Provence (Louis XVIII.), in his reply, said,

> "The order which the letter contains for me to return and resume my place by your majesty's person is not the free expression of your will. My honor, my duty, nay, even my affection alike forbid me to obey."

The Count of Artois (Charles X.) replied,

> "The decisions referred to in this letter have furnished me with a fresh proof of the moral and physical captivity in which our enemies dare to hold your majesty. After this declaration your majesty will think it natural that, faithful to my duty and the laws of honor, I should not obey orders evidently wrung from you by violence."

Another very serious difficulty now arose. The Constitution established freedom of conscience and of worship. It, however, justly required that all governmental officers should take the oath of allegiance to the Constitution. The Church had been so long in intimate alliance with the State, that that alliance was not severed, and the clergy, as public functionaries who received their salaries from the national treasury, were

consequently required to take the oath. Any one was at liberty to refuse to take this oath. By so doing he merely forfeited employment by the nation. He was still permitted to perform the functions of the ministry for any who were disposed to support him as their pastor.

In the Province of Vendée the majority of the clergy refused to take the oath, and carried with them the immense majority of the simple and superstitious peasants. The churches in which they had ministered were immediately assigned to other priests who had taken the oath. The great mass of the people abandoned the churches and followed their nonjuring pastors to private houses, barns, and into the fields. Great enthusiasm was excited, and the nonjuring priests endeavored to excite the people against their colleagues who had taken the oath, and against the people who accepted their ministrations. Acts of violence were frequent and civil war was imminent.

The Legislative Assembly was alarmed, and endeavored to meet the difficulty by adopting measures totally hostile to the free spirit of the Constitution. They resolved that the nonjuring priests should again be called upon to take the oath of allegiance to the Constitution; that, if they refused, they should be not only deprived of all salary, but should be removed from their parishes, and even imprisoned, if need be, that they might not excite their former parishioners to civil war. They were also forbidden to exercise the privilege of private worship. The administrative bodies were required to transmit a list of such priests to the Assembly, with notes relative to the conduct of each one.

These decrees were surely unconstitutional. The bishops and the priests who were endangered by them sent to the king an earnest remonstrance against them. Many of the most influential of the Constitutionalists were opposed to them as both tyrannical and cruel. The king was so moved that he said to his ministers, who coincided with him in opinion, "They shall take my life before they shall compel me to sanction such decrees."

The king returned the bill with his *veto*, and aggravated the odium this would naturally excite by retaining, contrary to the solicitations of his best friends, nonjuring ecclesiastics to perform the religious services of his chapel. Though we can not commend the *prudence* we must respect the *spirit* which impelled him to say,

> "The Constitution decrees freedom of religious worship for every body. The king is surely entitled to that liberty as much as his subjects."

All argument was on one side, but peril, more powerful than argument, on the other. "The nonjuring priests," it was exclaimed, "are exciting civil war. The law of self-defense renders it imperative that we should strike them down."

Upon the completion of the Constitution, La Fayette, emulating the character of Washington, resigned the command of the National Guard and retired to his estates. Bailly also resigned his post as mayor of Paris. The command of the Guard was intrusted to six generals, who were to exercise it in rotation. A new mayor of Paris was to be chosen. La Fayette was the candidate of the Constitutionalists, and Pétion of that radical portion of the Republicans who were termed Jacobins. The aristocracy, with their accustomed infatuation, supported Pétion with their influence and with a large outlay of money. They feared that a constitutional monarchy might be sustained, but they believed that the Jacobins would introduce such anarchy as might secure the recall of the old monarchy.

"The Marquis de la Fayette," said the queen, "only desires to be Mayor of Paris that he may be *mayor of the palace*. Pétion is a Jacobin and a Republican; but he is a fool, incapable of ever being the leader of a party. He will be a nullity of a mayor. Besides, it is possible that the knowledge of the interest we take in his election may bring him over to the king."[314]

Pétion was chosen by a large majority. Bitterly did the king and queen afterward bewail his election. But thus through all this tragedy did they spurn those who alone had the heart and the ability to help them.

In the midst of these troubles the most alarming rumors were every day reaching Paris respecting the threatening aspect of the emigrants. All along the Germanic frontiers, at Strasbourg, Coblentz, Worms, they were marshaling their battalions and collecting munitions of war. Exasperated by these persistent and audacious threats, the Assembly sent a deputation of twenty-four members to the king with a decree declaring that the Electors of Treves and Mentz, and other princes of the Germanic empire should be required to break up these hostile assemblages formed within

their territories for the invasion of France. M. de Vaublanc, who headed the deputation, said to the king,

> "Sire, if the French who were driven from their country by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes had assembled in arms on the frontiers, and had been protected by Germanic princes, we ask you, sire, what would have been the conduct of Louis XIV.? Would he have suffered these assemblages? That which he would have done for the sake of his authority, your majesty can not hesitate to do for the maintenance of the Constitution."

The king, anxious to regain the ground he had lost by his *veto*, decided to go to the Assembly and reply in person to their message. On the evening of the 14th of December, his coming having been previously announced, he entered the hall. He was received with the most frigid silence. His speech, however, soon enkindled enthusiasm and applause.

He assured the Assembly that he warmly sympathized with them in all their solicitude for the honor of France, that he had already signified to the Electors of Treves and Mentz that the continued assemblage of troops within their borders for the invasion of France would be deemed cause for war. He said that he had written to Leopold, the Emperor of Germany, demanding his interference to prevent the gathering of troops, hostile to France, within the limits of the Germanic empire, and concluded with the declaration that he would faithfully guard the Constitution, and that he appreciated the glory of being the king of a free people.[315]

This speech was received with great applause, and it was immediately voted that it should be sent to each of the eighty-three departments of the empire. Immediately upon the king's retiring, the Count Louis de Narbonne, minister of war, entered, and informed the Assembly that one hundred thousand men were immediately to be assembled, by order of the king, upon the Rhine, to repel invasion; that three generals were appointed to command them—Luckner, Rochambeau, and La Fayette; that he was about to set out immediately to inspect the fortresses on the frontiers. At the same time all the diplomatic agents who were accused of favoring the aristocratic party were removed, and more democratic officers were

appointed in their place. These measures were so popular, and gave such evidence that the king sincerely intended to defend the Constitution, that even the obnoxious *vetos* were accepted without farther murmurs.

These measures were prosecuted with vigor. Luckner and Rochambeau, having been appointed marshals of France, hastened to the frontiers. La Fayette soon followed them. Battalions of the National Guard escorted him as he left Paris, and he was greeted every where with shouts of applause.

The emigrants were unanimous in their desire for the invasion of France, for the entire overthrow of the Constitution, and the restoration of the Old Régime. Leopold of Austria, however, anxious for the safety of his sister Marie Antoinette, and embarrassed by the king's acceptance of the Constitution, was desirous of effecting some compromise by which a constitution should be permitted to France, but one much more aristocratic in its provisions. Gustavus of Sweden and Catherine of Russia were eager for prompt and energetic war. Catherine wrote a strong letter to Leopold to rouse him to action.

"The King of Prussia," she wrote, "for a mere incivility offered to his sister, sent an army into Holland to punish the affront. And will the Emperor of Austria patiently suffer insults and affronts to be heaped upon his sister, the Queen of France, the degradation of her rank and dignity, and the overthrow of the throne of a king who is his brother-in-law and his ally?"[316]

Under this state of affairs, the French embassador, in January, 1792, was instructed to inform the Austrian government that there was reason to apprehend that a coalition was being formed against the sovereignty and independence of France, and to inquire of Leopold whether he did or did not intend to interfere against the French Revolution. Thus pressed, the Austrian cabinet returned an answer containing the following avowal:

> "When France gave to Europe the spectacle of a lawful king forced by atrocious violence to fly, protesting solemnly against the acquiescence which they had extorted from him, and a little afterward stopped and detained prisoner by his subjects—yes, it then *did* concern the brother-in-law and the ally of the king to invite the other powers of Europe to join

> with him in a declaration to France that they all view the cause of his most Christian majesty as their own; that they demand that this prince and his family be set at liberty and have power to go where they please; and they require for these royal personages inviolability and due respect, which by the law of nature and nations are due from subjects to their princes; that they will unite to avenge in the most signal manner every farther attempt that may be committed, or may be suffered to be committed, against the liberty, the honor, and the safety of the king, the queen, and the royal family; and that, finally, they will not acknowledge as constitutional and legally established in France any laws but those which shall have the voluntary acquiescence of the king, enjoying perfect liberty. But if, on the other hand, these demands are not complied with, they will in concert employ all the means in their reach to put a stop to the scandalous usurpation of power which bears the appearance of an open rebellion, and which, from the dangers of the example, it concerns all the governments of Europe to repress."

The Republican party in the Legislative Assembly were called the Girondists because their leaders were generally from the department of the Gironde. The evidence to them was conclusive, and is now universally admitted, that the king, instead of sustaining the Constitution, was conspiring with the emigrants and the foreign powers for its overthrow. The Girondists, thus assured that the king was hostile to constitutional liberty while pretending that he was its friend that he might more effectually assail it, were anxious for his dethronement and for the establishment of a republic. Candor surely can not censure them. Twenty-five millions of men were not bound to place their liberties in the hands of a monarch who was conspiring with foreign foes to enslave them anew.

The Republican party increased so rapidly and swayed such an influence that the king was compelled early in 1792 to dismiss his Royalist ministers, and to call into his cabinet the leaders of the Republicans, Dumouriez, Roland, and others. He was compelled very

reluctantly to take this step, and soon by them he was compelled, with still greater reluctance, to declare war against Austria.

FOOTNOTES:

301. Bertrand de Moleville, t. vi., p. 22. See also Mémoires de Madame Campan, t. ii., p. 161.

302. "This Assembly (the Constituent) had consisted of the most imposing body of men that had ever represented, not only France, but the human race. The men of the Constituent Assembly were not Frenchmen, they were universal men. They were, and they felt themselves to be, workmen of God, called by him to restore social reason, and found right and justice throughout the universe. The declaration of the Rights of Man proves this. Thus there was not one of its apostles who did not proclaim peace among the nations. Mirabeau, La Fayette, Robespierre himself, erased war from the symbol which they presented to the nation."—*Hist. of the Girondists, by Lamartine*, vol. i., p. 250.

303. Lamartine, in cautious apology for these decrees, says, "The people was a slave, freed but yesterday, and who still trembled at the clank of his chains."—*Hist. of the Girondists*, vol. i., p. 210.

304. "The aristocratic party preferred any thing, even the Jacobins, to the establishment of the constitutional laws. The most unbridled disorders seemed preferable, because they buoyed up the hope of a total change; and, twenty times over, upon occasions when persons but little acquainted with the secret policy of the court expressed the apprehensions they entertained of the popular societies, the initiated answered that a sincere Royalist ought to favor the Jacobins."—*Madame Campan*, vol. ii., p. 162.

305. "What King Louis is, and can not help being, readers already know. A king who can not take the Constitution, nor reject the Constitution, nor do any thing at all but miserably ask, 'What shall I do?'"—*Carlyle, History of the French Revolution*, vol. ii., p. 22.

306. The king's government hired hand-clappers and applauders. Fifty thousand dollars a month were devoted to paragraph-writers and journalists. Two hundred and eighty applauders were hired at three shillings each a day to clap and shout whenever the king made his appearance, and to crowd the galleries of the Legislative Assembly whenever the king presented himself there. The account-books of this expenditure still exist.—*Montgaillard*, vol. iii., p. 141.

307. Madame Campan, vol. ii., p. 189.

308. Id., 174.

309. Bertrand Moleville, vol. i., p. 177. Bertrand was an eye-witness of this scene, which he graphically describes.

310. Madame Campan, vol. ii., p. 127.

311. The Empress Catharine of Russia wrote to Marie Antoinette a letter with her own hand, containing the following sentence: "Kings ought to proceed in their career, undisturbed by the cries of the people, as the moon pursues her course unimpeded by the howling of dogs."—*Madame Campan*, vol. i., p. 207.

312. Mémoires de Madame Campan, t. ii., p. 172.

313. Thiers, vol. i., p. 204.

314. Bertrand's Private Memoirs, vol. v., p. 106.

315. There was an earnest debate in February, 1800, in the British House of Commons as to who were the aggressors in this war. Mr. Pitt denounced the French as the aggressors. Mr. Fox, on the contrary, affirmed that the war was unavoidable on the part of France from the menacing conduct of the German powers.

316. Mémoires de Bouillé, p. 314.

Chapter XXV.
Agitation in Paris, and Commencement of Hostilities

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Death of Leopold.—Assassination of Gustavus.—Interview between Dumouriez and the Queen.—Discussion in the Assembly.—The Duke of Brunswick.—Interview of Barnave with the Queen.—Interview between Dumouriez and the King.—Dismissal of M. Roland.—The Palace invaded.—Fortitude of the King.—Pétion, the Mayor.—Affecting Interview of the Royal Family.—Remarks of Napoleon.

On the 1st of March, 1792, the Emperor Leopold died. His son, Francis II., a young man twenty-four years of age, ascended the throne. The court of Leopold had been a harem of unblushing sensuality and sin. He did not condescend to spread any veil over his amours. His attachments were numerous and fugitive, and his guilty favorites associated with each other and braved the frowns of the humiliated queen amid the voluptuousness of the palace. At the time of his death there dwelt with him Donna Maria, a young girl from Tuscany, whose surpassing charms had given her celebrity throughout Europe as "the beautiful Florentine;" a Polish girl of great attractions, Mademoiselle Prokache; and the Countess of Walkenstein, whose charms of person and fascination of manners gave her celebrity through all the European courts. Upon this latter favorite alone he lavished gifts, in drafts on the Bank of Vienna, to the amount of two hundred thousand dollars. There were also various other of these favorites of infamy, inferior in notoriety and rank. The annals of Roman story may be searched in vain to find a monarch more utterly profligate. Immediately after his death his widow said to her son Francis,

"My son, you have before you the sad proofs of your father's disorderly life and of my long afflictions. Remember nothing

> of them except my forgiveness and his virtues. Imitate his great qualities, but beware lest you fall into the same vices, in order that you may not, in your turn, put to the blush those who scrutinize your life."

Marie Antoinette doubted not that her cousin Francis would be as devoted to her interests as her brother Leopold had been. Fifteen days after the death of Leopold, Gustavus III. of Sweden was assassinated at a masked ball by the nobles of his court. His death momentarily embarrassed the movements of the emigrants, for he was actively engaged in raising an army for the invasion of France.[317]

The allies were now vigorously raising troops and directing their march towards the frontiers of France. Some hoped that the demonstration would overawe the French and frighten them into submission. Others were eager, by prompt invasion, to submit the question to the arbitrament of battle. The Assembly speedily dispatched to the threatened frontier three armies of defense. Rochambeau was placed in command of the army of the north, at Flanders, consisting of 63,000 men; La Fayette was sent to the army of the centre, at Metz, which was 52,000 strong; Luckner occupied Alsace, with 48,000 troops.[318]

In calling the Girondists into the ministry, General Dumouriez, a brave and veteran soldier, was appointed to the ministry of foreign affairs. With great vigor he prosecuted arrangements for the defense of France. In addition to the troops, amounting to 163,000, stationed along the northwestern frontier from Dunkirk to Besançon, he raised a fourth army to repel invasion from Spain through the passes of the Pyrenees.

Dumouriez had acquired great popularity in the club of the Jacobins by frequenting their meetings, and by wearing the red cap of liberty, an emblem borrowed from the Phrygians. The queen was highly indignant that one in sympathy with the Jacobins should be called into the ministry, and, as she was now heartily in sympathy with the emigrants and the allies, she was provoked by the vigorous measures adopted to repel them. Dumouriez was a soldier, not a statesman; a man of heroic character, brave, impulsive, and generous. He had great power over the mind of the king; and the queen, anxious to see him, appointed an audience. In the memoirs of Dumouriez we find a narrative of this interview. Upon being

ushered into her apartment, he found the queen, with flushed cheeks, rapidly pacing the floor, and giving every indication of extreme excitement. Dumouriez, embarrassed by this aspect of affairs, advanced in silence to a corner of the fire-place, when the queen turned toward him and abruptly said, with an air and tone of anger,

> "Sir, you are all-powerful at this moment, but it is through the favor of the people, who soon break their idols in pieces. Your existence depends upon your conduct. It is said that you possess great abilities. You must be aware that neither the king nor myself can endure these innovations, nor the Constitution. This I tell you frankly. Choose your side."

"Madame," Dumouriez replied, "I am deeply pained by the secret which your majesty has just imparted to me. I will not betray it. But I stand between the king and my nation, and I belong to my country. Permit me to say that the welfare of the king, your own, and that of your children, are linked with the Constitution. You are surrounded by enemies who are sacrificing you to their private interests. The Constitution, when once in vigor, so far from bringing misery upon the king, will constitute his happiness and glory. It is absolutely necessary that he should concur in establishing it solidly and speedily."

The queen could never endure contradiction. Losing all self-control, she exclaimed, in a loud and angry tone, "The Constitution will not last. Take care of yourself."

Dumouriez quietly and firmly replied, "Madame, I am past fifty; my life has been crossed by many perils; and, in accepting the ministry, I was thoroughly sensible that *responsibility* was not the greatest of my dangers."

The queen, in the blindness of her passion, saw fit to interpret this remark as an insinuation that she might cause him to be assassinated. With inflamed cheeks and tears gushing into her eyes, she replied,

> "Nothing more was wanting but to calumniate me. You seem to think me capable of causing you to be murdered."

The scene had now become painful in the extreme, and Dumouriez, greatly agitated, answered,

> "God preserve me, madame, from doing you so cruel an injury. The character of your majesty is great and noble. You have given heroic proofs of it which I have admired, and which have attached me to you. Believe me, I have no interest in deceiving you. I abhor anarchy and crime as much as you do. But this is not a transient popular movement, as you seem to think. It is an almost unanimous insurrection of a mighty nation against inveterate abuses. Great factions fan this flame. In all of them there are villains and madmen. In the Revolution I keep in view only the king and the entire nation; all that tends to part them leads to their mutual ruin. I strive as much as possible to unite them. If I am an obstacle to your designs, tell me so. I will instantly send my resignation to the king, and hide myself in some corner to mourn over your fate and that of my country."[319]

This conversation restored Dumouriez to the confidence of the queen, and she conversed frankly and with a friendly spirit with him upon her griefs and perils.

"You see me," she said, "very sad. I dare not approach the window which looks into the garden. Yesterday evening I went to the window toward the court just to take a little air. A gunner of the guard addressed me in terms of vulgar abuse, adding, 'How I should like to see your head on the point of my bayonet!' In this horrid garden you see on one side a man, mounted on a chair, reading aloud the most abominable calumnies against us; on the other, a military man or an abbé dragged through one of the basins, overwhelmed with abuse, and beaten, while others are playing at ball, or quietly walking about. What an abode! what a people!"

The Austrian monarchy, supported by the other powers of Europe, now sent to France the insolent demand that the French monarchy should be restored almost to its pristine despotic power; that the three estates of the realm—the clergy, the nobles, and the *tiers état*, should be re-established, and that there should be the restitution of Church property. It is not

surprising that an independent nation of twenty-five millions should have resented such impertinence. There was a general cry of indignation from the Assembly, which was re-echoed by the people, and new vigor was infused on both sides into the preparations for the war.

The king was sorely perplexed. In the event of war, victory would but strengthen the Revolutionary party; defeat would expose him to the charge of treason in feebly conducting hostilities. But France would not yield to this insulting foreign dictation, and the pressure of public opinion fell so strong upon the king that he was constrained, much against his will, to issue a declaration of war. Pale and care-worn the king entered the Assembly, and, after presenting through his minister a report of the demands of Austria, with a faltering voice read his speech.

"Gentlemen," said he, "you have heard the result of the negotiation in which I have been engaged with the court of Vienna. The conclusions of the report have been unanimously adopted by my council. I have myself adopted them. All would rather have war than see the dignity of the French people any longer insulted and the national security threatened. Having employed all possible means to obtain peace, I come now, agreeably to the terms of the Constitution, to propose to the National Assembly war against the King of Hungary and Bohemia."[320]

The proposal was received with shouts of "*Vive le Roi*," and the decree was passed by a great majority.[321] In the debates which the question of war had excited, great eloquence was displayed in the Assembly. M. Isnard spoke in terms of enthusiasm which brought the whole Assembly to their feet.

LOUIS XVI. IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

"Capitulations," said he, "are proposed to you. It is proposed to increase the power of the king—of a man whose will can paralyze that of a whole nation—of a man who receives thirty millions ($6,000,000) while thousands of citizens are perishing from want. It is proposed to bring back the nobility. Were all the nobles on earth to attack us, the French, holding their gold in one hand, and their sword in the other, would combat that haughty race, and force it to endure the punishment of equality.

"Tell Europe that you will respect the Constitutions of all other countries, but that, if a war of kings is raised against France, you will raise a war of people against kings. The battles which nations fight at the command of despots are like the blows which two friends, excited by a perfidious instigator, strike at each other in the dark. The moment a light appears they embrace and take vengeance on him who deluded them. In like manner, if, at the moment when the hostile armies shall be engaged with ours, the light of philosophy bursts upon their sight, the nations will

embrace each other before the face of dethroned tyrants, of consoled earth, and of delighted heaven."[322]

Vergniaud, the illustrious leader of the Gironde, said eloquently, "Our resolution has spread alarm among all thrones, for it has given an example of the destruction of the despotism which sustains them. Kings hate our Constitution because it renders men free, and they would reign over slaves. This hate has been manifested on the part of the Emperor of Germany by all the measures he has adopted to disturb us or to strengthen our enemies and encourage those Frenchmen who have rebelled against the laws of their country.

"Let us demand that the *emigrants* be dispersed. I might demand that they be given up to the country they insult and to punishment. But no. If they have been greedy for our blood, let us not show ourselves greedy for theirs. Their crime is having wished to destroy their country. Let them be vagrants and wanderers on the face of the earth, and let their punishment be never to find a country."

The most vigorous preparations were now made on both sides for the prosecution of the war. Francis of Austria and Frederick of Prussia met the Duke of Brunswick, Generallissimo of the Confederation, at Frankfort. The duke, who had married a sister of George III. of England, was an energetic, veteran soldier, fifty years of age. His head-quarters were at Coblentz, a town at the confluence of the Moselle and the Rhine, in the state of the Elector of Treves. Twenty-two thousand French emigrants had assembled there in arms. Seven French princes of the House of Bourbon were marshaling them for battle against their native land—to crush the people struggling for liberty—to rivet anew the fetters of the most execrable despotism. These princes were the two brothers of the king, Louis and Charles, the one subsequently Louis XVIII., the other Charles X.; the Duke of Berri and the Duke of Angoulême, sons of Charles; the Prince of Condé, cousin of the king, his son, the Duke of Bourbon, and his grandson, the Duke d'Enghien. All the military noblesse of the kingdom, with the exception of the few who had accepted the Constitution, had deserted their garrisons and united in the most atrocious act of treason. They were not only ready to march themselves, but were combining despotic Europe to march with them to crush the liberties of their country.

The peril of the king was now hourly increasing, for he was playing a double part. While publicly declaring war he was secretly carrying on a correspondence with the emigrants and with the foreign powers, encouraging them to make war upon France. This was known by some, and suspicions of the king's sincerity were spreading rapidly among the people. He had many papers in his possession, which, if discovered, would cause his ruin. To conceal them he had an iron chest built into the thick wall of one of his apartments. This was done by the confidential locksmith who had been his companion at the forge for ten years. The wall was painted to resemble large stones. The openings of the panel were masked in the brown grooves. But after constructing this safe the king was apprehensive that his locksmith would betray him, and he consequently intrusted a portfolio containing many of his most important papers to the care of Madame Campan.

On the 28th of April, one week after the declaration of war, a very ill-advised attack was made by the French in three detachments upon three separate positions of the Austrians. But the Austrians, minutely informed of the plan, were prepared, in stronger numbers, to meet their foes. The undisciplined French troops were driven back in confusion and shame. They thought that the king had treacherously ordered them to be led into a snare. The populace generally adopted the same belief. After this the troops, on both sides, widely dispersed and poorly provided with ammunition, provisions, and camp-equipage, could only observe each other for several weeks, and make preparation for the opening of the campaign.

Suspicions of the insincerity of the king were rapidly spreading among the people, while those acquainted with the royal family saw plainly that they were placing all their reliance in hopes of assistance from the armed emigrants. Barnave, who, since the return from Varennes, had periled his influence and his life in his endeavor to save the royal family, finding all his efforts rejected, and that the king and queen were rushing to ruin, solicited a last audience with the queen.

"Your misfortunes," said he, "and those which I anticipate for France determined me to sacrifice myself to serve you. I see that my advice does not agree with the views of your majesties. I augur but little advantage from the plan you are induced to pursue; you are too remote from your

succors; you will be lost before they reach you. Most ardently do I wish I may be mistaken in so lamentable a prediction. But I am sure to pay my head for the interest your misfortunes have raised in me and the services I have sought to render you. I request for my sole reward the honor of kissing your hand."

The queen, her eyes suffused with tears, presented her hand to Barnave, and he, with much emotion imprinting a kiss upon it, took his leave. His devotion to the queen, however, cost him his life. Hardly a year elapsed ere he was led to the scaffold.

Two decrees had been passed by the Assembly which were quite obnoxious to the king. One decree enacted that any nonjuring priest who should be denounced by twenty citizens as endeavoring to excite faction should be banished the kingdom. The other established a camp of twenty thousand men[323] under the walls of Paris for its protection. The king, expecting that the foreign armies would soon arrive and rescue him, put his veto upon both of these measures. Dumouriez entreated the king to sanction these decrees, but in vain, and he was compelled to resign his post in the ministry. He was immediately commissioned to the frontiers to aid in the war against the invaders. As he entered the cabinet of the king to render in his accounts and to take leave, the king said,

"You go, then, to join the army of Luckner?"

"Yes, sire," replied Dumouriez, "and I am delighted to leave this tumultuous city. I have but one regret—your majesty is in danger."

"Yes," replied Louis, with a sigh, "I certainly am."

"Ah! sire," returned the minister, "you can no longer suppose that I spoke from any interested motive. Let me implore you not to persist in your fatal resolution."

"Speak no more of it," said the king, "my part is taken."

"Ah! sire," rejoined Dumouriez, "you said the same when in this very chamber in the presence of the queen you gave me your word."

"I was wrong then," replied the king, "and I repent that I did so."

"It is now, sire, that you are wrong," continued Dumouriez, "not then. I shall see you no more. They abuse your religious scruples. They are leading you to a civil war. You are without force, and you will be

overpowered. History will accuse you of having caused the calamities of France."

"God is my witness," said Louis in tones of the deepest affliction, and at the same time placing his hands affectionately upon those of Dumouriez, "that I wish the happiness of France."

Tears gushed into the eyes of Dumouriez, and his voice was broken with emotion as he replied, "I do not doubt it, sire; but you are answerable to God, not only for the purity but for the enlightened direction of your intentions. You think that you are protecting religion, and you are destroying it. The priests will be massacred. You will lose your crown, perhaps your wife, your children."

There was a moment of silence, during which the king pressed the hand of his faithful friend; Dumouriez then continued:

"Sire, if all the French knew you as I know you, our calamities would soon be at an end. You wish the happiness of France. You have been sacrificing yourself to the nation ever since 1789. Continue to do so, and our troubles will soon cease, the Constitution will be established, the French will return to their natural character, and the remainder of your reign will be happy."

"I expect my death," the king rejoined mournfully, "and I forgive my enemies. I thank you for the sensibility you have shown. You have served me well, and you have my esteem, and you shall have proofs of it if I am ever to see a better day."

The king then rose, and, to conceal his emotion, went hastily to a window. Dumouriez gathered up his papers slowly that he might have time to regain his composure. As he was leaving the room the king again approached him, and in a tremulous tone said "Adieu! may all happiness attend you." They parted, both in tears.[324]

M. Roland, Minister of the Interior, presented a letter to the king, urging him to sanction the decrees, and to adopt a course more in accordance with the spirit of constitutional liberty. This letter has obtained world-wide celebrity. It was written by Madame Roland, the wife of the minister, one of the most extraordinary women of that or any other age. She was, in fact, the soul of the Republican party. The leaders of that party met every evening in her saloon, and her sagacity originated the measures

which they adopted. She was a woman of heroic mould, and endowed with wonderful powers of intellect and eloquence. The letter contained a lively exposition of the peril to which the king was exposed by opposing the establishment of constitutional liberty in France. The indignation of the king was aroused by its plain utterance, and he instantly dismissed the Republican minister, Roland, with his associates, Servan and Clavieres. Roland presented to the Assembly the letter which had caused his dismission. It roused the indignation of the Assembly against the king, and fanned Paris into almost a flame of fury. The letter was printed and copies sent to the eighty-three departments, and a vote was passed that the three ministers whom the king had rejected retained the entire confidence of the nation. This was another accusation against the king, which greatly increased his unpopularity.

The vetos of the king and the dismissal of the popular ministers roused a new storm of indignation. Neither the king nor queen could appear at the windows of the palace without exposing themselves to the most atrocious insults of language and gesture from the brutal men who ever thronged the garden.[325]

The king lost all heart, and sank into the most deplorable condition of mental and physical weakness. For ten days he wandered restlessly through his apartments with a bewildered, vacant stare, without uttering a single word even to his wife and children, and scarcely making any reply to questions addressed to him. His sister, Madame Elizabeth, endeavored to interest him in a game of backgammon. He sat listlessly at the board, mechanically throwing the dice, and simply repeating the words which belong to the game.

"The queen," says Madame Campan, "roused him from this state, so fatal at a critical period, when every minute increased the necessity for action, by throwing herself at his feet, urging every idea calculated to excite alarm, and employing every affectionate expression. She represented, also, what he owed to his family, and went so far as to tell him that, if they were doomed to fall, they ought to fall honorably, and not to wait to be both smothered upon the floor of their apartment."[326]

On the 20th of June there was an immense gathering of the populace of Paris, and of delegates from other parts of the kingdom, to celebrate the

anniversary of the meeting in the tennis-court, and to present a petition to the king urging him to withdraw his vetos. Deep apprehensions were felt in several quarters respecting the results of the day. Pétion, who was then mayor of the city, did not venture to prohibit the celebration, but adopted the precaution of doubling the guard of the Tuileries.

FESTIVAL IN HONOR OF LIBERTY.

Early in the morning the whole city was in commotion, and vast crowds were hurrying to the various points of concentration. The Assembly met at eleven o'clock, and was alarmed in view of the possible issues of the day, and agitated by discordant councils. The session soon became tumultuous, the Constitutionalists wishing to repress the disorder which the Jacobins were ready to foment. In this state of affairs a letter was brought into the Assembly from Santerre, a brewer, who had become notorious as a leader of the populace.[327] It stated that the citizens were merely celebrating the anniversary of the 20th of June; that they were

calumniated in the Assembly; and that they beg to be admitted to the bar of the Assembly that they might confound their slanderers.

The reading of this letter vastly increased the tumult. In the midst of cries of order, and a scene of indescribable confusion, it was announced that the petitioners, with arms and banners, in a prolonged procession of thirty thousand men, were approaching the hall. All power of law seemed paralyzed, and bewilderment and consternation reigned. Soon the head of the procession, like a lava-flood, crowded in at the door, and, pressed by the resistless mass behind, was forced slowly through the hall, and made its egress at an opposite portal. They bore enormous tables, upon which were placed the Declaration of Rights. Around these tables danced women and boys waving olive-branches and brandishing pikes, thus emblematically declaring themselves ready for peace or war.

The enormous procession filed slowly through the hall, shouting in deafening chorus the famous "*Ça ira*" (bravely it goes), armed with every conceivable weapon, and waving banners inscribed with revolutionary devices. Several bore ragged breeches upon poles, while the crowd around shouted, "*Vivent les sans culottes!*" One man bore on the point of a pike a calf's heart, with the inscription beneath, "*The heart of an aristocrat*."[328]

For three hours this extraordinary scene continued. The Assembly, agitated with grief and indignation, had no resource but submission. The mob, having passed through the hall of the Assembly, now attempted to enter the garden of the Tuileries, but the gates were closed and defended by numerous detachments of the National Guard. The king, however, perhaps hoping, by a show of confidence, to disarm the mob, ordered the garden gates to be thrown open. The mob, like an inundation, rushed in, and with their mighty mass soon filled the whole inclosure. Some cried out for the king to show himself. Others shouted, "Down with the *veto*!" A few voices kindly gave utterance to the old excuse, "The king means well, but he is imposed upon."

The mob, which now appeared countless and almost limitless, flowing out from the garden by the gate leading to the Pont Royal, proceeded along the quay and through the wickets of the Louvre into the Place du Carrousel. They were soon gathered in a dense mass before the royal gate of the palace. A strong guard there refused them admittance. Santerre

brought up two pieces of cannon to blow down the gate. Two municipal officers then strangely ordered the gates to be thrown open.

The multitude rushed impetuously into the court, filling it in an instant, and crowding into the vestibule of the palace. It was now four o'clock in the afternoon. They clambered the magnificent staircase, even dragging a piece of cannon up to the first floor, and poured in locust legions into every part of the palace. Wherever they found a door barred against them they speedily, with swords and hatchets, hewed it down.

The king was in one of the interior apartments, surrounded by some of the servants of his household and by several officers of the National Guard. His sister, Madame Elizabeth, happened to be with him; but the queen, who was in another room with her children, had not been able to join her husband, so sudden had been the irruption. The crowd arrested her in her flight in the council-chamber. She begged earnestly to be led to her husband, but the throng pouring by was so dense that it was impossible. Her friends placed her in a corner, and rolled the council-table before her as a barrier.

There she stood stupefied with horror, and her eyes suffused with tears, while the low and brutal masses, with no apparent exasperation, end, or aim, crowded by. Her daughter clung to her side, terrified and weeping. Her son, but seven years of age, too young to understand the terrible significance of such an inundation, gazed upon the spectacle with half alarmed, half pleased wonder. Some of the palace-guard gathered around the group for its protection. Occasional scowls and mutterings of defiance and insult alarmed the queen in behalf of her children rather than herself. Some one handed her son the red cap of the Jacobins. The queen, hoping that it might appease the mob, placed it upon his head.

Just then Santerre came along, forcing his way with the crowd. He spoke kindly to the queen, repeating the only excuse which could be made for her, "Madame, you are imposed upon." Seeing the red cap upon the head of the dauphin, he, with a sense of delicacy hardly to be expected in so coarse a man, took it and threw it aside, saying, "The child is stifling." He then urged the people to treat the queen with respect.

A young girl stopped before the queen and assailed her with an incessant volley of imprecations.

"Have I ever," said the queen, calmly, "done you any wrong?"

"No," replied the girl, "not me personally; but you are the cause of the misery of the nation."

"You have been told so," answered the queen; "but you are deceived. As the wife of the King of France and mother of the dauphin, I am a Frenchwoman. I shall never see my own country again. I can be happy only in France. I was happy when you loved me."

These words touched the heart of the passionate but not hardened girl, and she began to weep, saying,

"I ask your pardon. It was because I did not know you. I see that you are good."

While these scenes were transpiring in the council-chamber, the cries of the mob were heard at the door of the king's apartment, and blows from a hatchet fell heavily upon the panels. As a panel, driven by a violent blow, fell at the king's feet, he ordered the door to be thrown open. A forest of pikes and bayonets appeared, and the crowd rushed in. The king, with that courage of resignation which never forsook him, stepped forward with dignity to meet the rabble, and said, "Here I am."

His friends immediately threw themselves around him, forming a rampart with their bodies. The mob, who seemed to have no definite object in view, fell back, and the friends of the king placed him in the embrasure of a window, where he could more easily be protected from the pressure. There was a moment's lull, and then came renewed clamor and uproar. Some said that they had a petition which they wished to present to the king. Others shouted, "No veto! No priests! No aristocrats! The camp near Paris."

The king stood upon a bench, and with marvelous serenity gazed upon the unparalleled spectacle. Légendre, the butcher, one of the leaders of the mob, stepped up, and with a firm voice demanded in the name of the people the sanction of the two decrees which the king had vetoed.[329]

"This is not the place, neither is this the time," answered the king, firmly, "to grant such a request. I will do all the Constitution requires."

This bold answer seemed to exasperate the crowd, and they shouted, as it were defiantly, "*Vive la Nation!*"

"Yes," replied the king, heroically, "*Vive la Nation!* and I am its best friend."

"Prove it, then," cried one of the rabble, thrusting toward him, on the end of a pike, the red cap of the Jacobins.

The king took the cap and placed it upon his head. The mob responded with shouts of applause. The day was oppressively hot, and the king, who was very corpulent, was almost suffocated with the heat and the crowd. A drunken fellow, who had a bottle and a glass, staggered up to the king, and offered him a tumbler of wine, saying, "If you love the people, drink to their health."

Though the king had long been apprehensive of being poisoned, he took the glass and without hesitation drank its contents. Again he was greeted with shouts of applause. Some of the crowd, as they caught sight of Madame Elizabeth, cried out, "There is the Austrian woman!" The unpopularity of the queen excited murmurs and imprecations, and the princess was in great danger of violence. Some of her friends around her endeavored to undeceive the mob.

"Leave them," said the generous and heroic princess, "leave them to think that I am the queen, that she may have time to escape."

The Assembly was immediately informed of the invasion of the palace. The Constitutionalists were indignant. The Jacobins were satisfied, for they wished to see the king and the king's party frightened into obedience. An angry and almost furious altercation ensued in the Assembly. A deputation of twenty-four members was, however, immediately sent to surround the king, and this deputation was renewed every half hour. But the deputies could not force their way through the crowd. Hoisted upon the shoulders of the grenadiers they endeavored in vain to harangue the mob to order. It was half past five o'clock, an hour and a half after the attack upon the Tuileries had commenced, before Pétion, the Mayor of Paris, made his appearance in the presence of the king. He attempted an apology for coming so late, saying,

"I have only just learned the situation of your majesty."

THE CAP OF LIBERTY PLACED UPON THE KING.

"That is very astonishing," replied the king, "for it is a long time that it has lasted."

"It was half past four," Pétion rejoined, "when I heard of the attack. It took me half an hour to get to the palace; and I could not overcome the obstacles which separated me from your majesty until the present moment. But fear nothing, sire; you are in the midst of your people."

Louis XVI., taking the hand of a grenadier who stood by his side, placed it upon his heart, saying, "Feel whether it beats quicker than usual."

This noble answer again elicited applause. The mayor then, mounting the shoulders of four grenadiers, addressed the mob, urging them to retire.

"Citizens, male and female," said he, "you have used with moderation and dignity your right of petition. You will finish this day as you begun it.

Hitherto your conduct has been in conformity with the law, and now, in the name of the law, I call upon you to follow my example and to retire."

The crowd obeyed and slowly moved off through the long suite of apartments of the chateau. As soon as they began to retire the king and his sister threw themselves into each other's arms, and neither was able to repress a flood of tears. Locked in an embrace they left the room to find the queen. She, with her children, had just regained her apartment. The meeting of the royal family, after these scenes of violence, insult, and terror, drew tears into the eyes of all the beholders. One of the deputies, Antoine Merlin of Thionville, though one of the most virulent of the Jacobins, could not refrain from weeping. Marie Antoinette observing it, and knowing his bitter hostility to the court, said,

"You weep to see the king and his family treated so cruelly by a people whom he has always wished to render happy."

"It is true, madam," replied Merlin, "I weep over the misfortunes of a beautiful, tender-hearted woman and mother of a family. But do not mistake; there is not one of my tears for the *king* or the *queen*; I hate kings and queens."

At this moment the king, from the reflection of a mirror, saw the *red bonnet* still upon his head. A crimson glow flushed his face and he hastily threw the badge of the Jacobin from him. Sinking into a chair he for a moment buried his face in his handkerchief, and then, turning a saddened look to the queen, said,

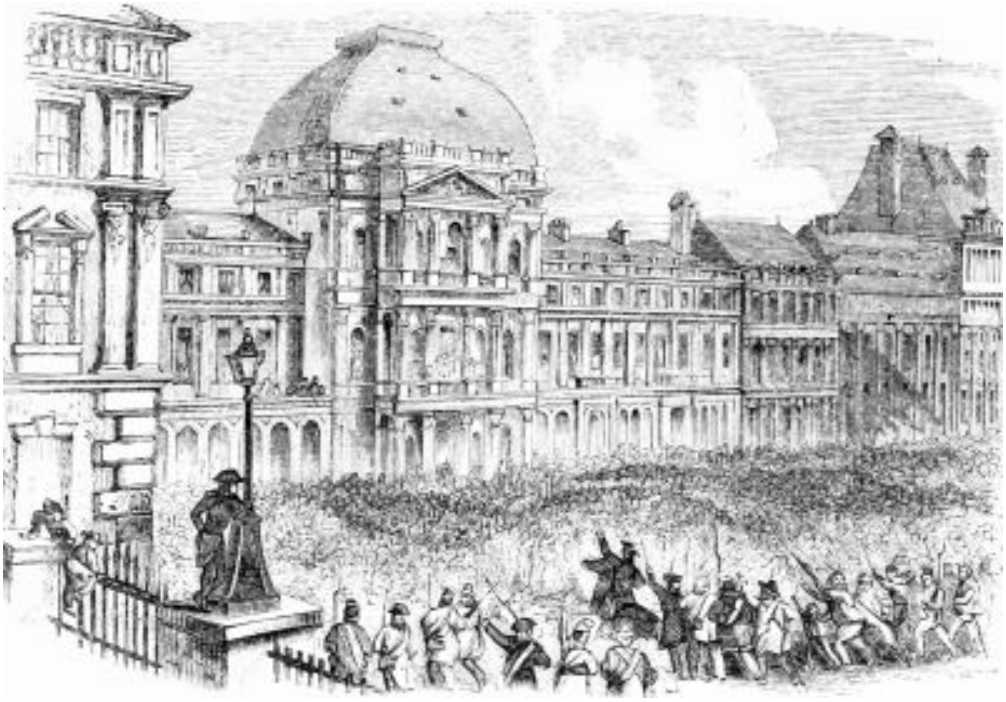
"Ah, madame, why did I take you from your country to associate you with the ignominy of such a day!"

It was eight o'clock in the evening before the apartments and corridors of the palace ceased to echo with the voices and the footsteps of the barbarian invaders. Detachments of the National Guard gradually assembled, the court-yard and the garden were cleared, and night with its silence and darkness again settled down over the wretched royal family in the halls of their palace, and the wretched famishing outcasts wandering through the streets. Such was the 20th of June, 1792.

Napoleon Bonaparte, then twenty-two years of age, was in Paris, and with indignation witnessed this spectacle of lawlessness. Bourrienne thus describes the event: "In the month of April, 1792, I returned to Paris, where I again met Bonaparte, and renewed the friendship of our youthful

days. I had not been fortunate, and adversity pressed heavily upon him. We passed our time as two young men of three and twenty may be supposed to have done who had little money and less occupation. At this time he was soliciting employment from the Minister of War, and I at the office of foreign affairs.

"While we were thus spending our time the 20th of June arrived, a sad prelude of the 10th of August. We met by appointment at a restaurateur's, in the Rue St. Honoré, near the Palais Royal. On going out we saw a mob approaching in the direction of the market-place, which Bonaparte estimated at from five to six thousand men. They were a parcel of blackguards, armed with weapons of every description, and shouting the grossest abuse, while they proceeded at a rapid rate toward the Tuileries. This mob appeared to consist of the vilest and most profligate of the population of the suburbs.



THE ATTACK UPON THE TUILERIES.

"'Let us follow the rabble,' said Bonaparte. We got the start of them, and took up our station on the terrace bordering on the river. It was there that he was an eye-witness of the scandalous scenes which ensued, and it would be difficult to describe the surprise and indignation which they excited in him. Such weakness and forbearance, he said, could not be

excused. But when the king showed himself at the window which looked out upon the garden, with the red cap which one of the mob had just placed upon his head, he could no longer repress his indignation.

"'What madness!' he loudly exclaimed. 'How could they have allowed that rabble to enter? Why did they not sweep away four or five hundred of them with the cannon? The rest would then have speedily taken to their heels.'"

FOOTNOTES:

317. At the moment of Leopold's death all was ready for hostilities. Two hundred thousand men were under arms for the invasion. The Duke of Brunswick, who was placed in command, was at Berlin receiving the final commands of the king. Another Prussian general was at Vienna receiving from Leopold advice as to the time and point of attack. Leopold, whose constitution was shattered by debauchery, was taken suddenly sick, and, after two days of excruciating pain, died in convulsions. His death was probably caused by an immoderate use of drugs to recruit his system, enervated by dissipation. This event for a short time paralyzed the energies of the coalition. See History of the Girondists, by Lamartine, vol. i., p. 364.

318. Memoirs of Count Mathieu Dumas, vol. i., p. 190.

319. Dumouriez's Memoirs, book iii., ch. vi. Madame Campan gives an account of this interview with a little different coloring. "One day," she writes, "I found the queen in extreme agitation. She told me that she knew not what to do; that the leaders of the Jacobins had offered themselves to her through Dumouriez, or that Dumouriez, forsaking the party of the Jacobins, had come and offered himself to her; that she had given him an audience; that, being alone with her, he had thrown himself at her feet, and told her that he had put on the red cap, and even pulled it down over his ears, but that he neither was, nor ever could be, a Jacobin; that the Revolution had been suffered to roll on to that mob of disorganizers, who, aspiring only to pillage, were capable of every thing. While speaking with extreme warmth, he had taken hold of the queen's hand and kissed it with transport, saying, 'Allow yourself to be saved.' The queen told me that it was impossible to believe the protestations of a traitor; that all his conduct was so well known that the wisest plan was not to trust in him, and, besides, the princes earnestly recommended that no confidence should be placed in any proposal from the interior."—*Madame Campan*, vol. ii., p. 202.

320. Francis was not yet elected Emperor of Germany.

321. Condorcet, in a paper which he drew up in exposition of the motives which led to this strife, says, "The veil which concealed the intentions of our enemy is at length torn. Citizens, which of you could subscribe to these ignominious proposals? Feudal servitude and a humiliating inequality; bankruptcy and taxes which you alone would pay; tithes and the Inquisition; your possessions, bought upon the public faith, restored to their former usurpers; the beasts of the chase re-established in their right of ravaging your fields; your blood profusely spilled for the ambitious projects of a hostile house—such are the conditions of the treaty between the King of Hungary and perfidious Frenchmen! Such is the peace which is offered to you! No! never

will you accept it!"—*Exposition of the motives which determined the National Assembly to decree, on the formal proposal of the King, that there is reason to declare war against the King of Hungary and Bohemia, by M. Condorcet.*

322. Prof. Wm. Smyth, of the University of Cambridge, England, though cherishing no sympathies with the revolutionary party in France, in his admirable lectures upon the French Revolution, with his accustomed candor, says,

"The question then is, Was this (the conduct of Austria) an interference in the internal affairs of France that justified a declaration of war on the part of France or not? This is a point on which, under the extraordinary circumstances of the case, reasoners may differ, but I conceive that it was. The rulers of France, at the time, saw themselves menaced, stigmatized, and, as nearly as possible, proscribed by a foreign power on account of their conduct to their own king, in their own country. They could expect nothing but exile, imprisonment, and death if these foreign powers invaded their country in defense of the monarchy and succeeded; and not only this, but, in that case, a counter-revolution was inevitable.

"I must confess that, with all my horror of war, of counsels of violence, of enthusiastic and furious men like these Girondists, and of dreadful and guilty men like these Jacobins, I must confess that upon this particular point of the Austrian war I am, on the whole, compelled to agree with them. I see not how, upon any other principle, the peace of the world can be maintained, or the proper sovereignty and independence of nations be preserved, nor, finally, upon any other principle, what chance there can ever be for the general cause of the freedom of mankind."

323. Dumas, vol. i., p. 213.

324. Memoirs of Dumouriez.

325. "The most menacing cries were uttered aloud, even in the Tuileries. They called for the destruction of the throne and the murder of the sovereign. These insults assumed the character of the very lowest of the mob. The queen, one day, hearing roars of laughter under her windows, desired me to see what it was about. I saw a man, almost undressed, turning his back toward her apartments. My astonishment and indignation were apparent. The queen rose to come forward. I held her back, telling her it was a very gross insult offered by one of the rabble."—*Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, by Madame Campan*, vol. ii., p. 205.

326. Madame Campan, vol. ii., p. 206.

327. Montjoie, one of the most decided of Royalist writers, thus describes Santerre: "The muscular expansion of his tall person, the sonorous hoarseness of his voice, his rough manners, and his easy and vulgar eloquence, of course made him a hero among the lower rabble. And, in truth, he had gained a despotic empire over the dregs of the faubourgs. He moved them at will, but that was all he knew how to do, or could do, for, as to the rest, he was neither wicked nor cruel. He engaged blindly in all conspiracies, but he never was guilty of the execution of them, either by himself or by those who obeyed him. He was always concerned for an unfortunate person, of whatever party he might be. Affliction and tears disarmed his hands."—*History of Marie Antoinette, by Montjoie*, p. 295.

328. Madame Campan says, "There was one representing a gibbet, to which a dirty doll was suspended; the words '*Marie Antoinette à la lanterne*' were written beneath it. Another was a board to which a bullock's heart was fastened, with an inscription round it, '*Heart of Louis*

XVI.;' and then a third showed the horns of an ox, with an obscene legend."—*Madame Campan*, vol. ii., p. 212.

329. Léegendre was a butcher of Paris. He was one of the most violent leaders of the mob. In 1791 he was deputed by the city of Paris to the National Convention. In 1793 he voted for the king's death, and, the day before his execution, proposed to the Jacobins to cut him into eighty-four pieces, and send one to each of the eighty-four departments. He died at Paris in 1797, aged forty-one, and bequeathed his body to the surgeons, "in order to be useful to mankind after his death."—*Biographie Moderne.*

Chapter XXVI.
The Throne Assailed

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Angry Interview between the King and the Mayor.—Decisive Action of La Fayette.—Expectations of the Queen.—Movement of the Prussian Army.—Efforts of the Priests.—Secret Committee of Royalists.—Terror in the Palace.—The Queen's View of the King's Character.—Parties in France.—Energetic Action of the Assembly.—Speech of Vergniaud.

The next day after the fearful scenes of the 20th of June, the Assembly held a very tumultuous sitting. Various measures were proposed to prevent a repetition of armed petitions, and the filing of processions through the hall. The Jacobins were, however, in sympathy with the mob; and the Royalists, waiting the approach of foreign armies, had no wish to introduce order but by the sword of invasion. It was apprehended that the mob, who had now risen above the power of law, might again invade the palace. In the afternoon of the 21st, crowds began to assemble at various points, but the mayor, Pétion, succeeded in inducing them to disperse. He then hastened to the king, and said to him

"Sire, there is no longer cause for alarm. Order is restored. The people have become tranquil and satisfied."

The king, who now appreciated the peril of his position, was exasperated, and replied, with suppressed emotion, "That is not true."

"Sire—" rejoined Pétion.

"Be silent," said the king sternly, interrupting him.

"It befits not the magistrate of the people," replied Pétion, "to be silent when he does his duty and speaks the truth."

"The tranquillity of Paris rests on your head," added the king.

"I know my duty," Pétion replied, "and shall perform it."

The king could no longer restrain himself, and passionately exclaimed, "Enough; go and perform it. Retire."

Pétion, thus summarily turned out of doors, bowed and left. The report of the angry interview was speedily spread through Paris. It was rumored *through the palace* that the mob were preparing to rise to murder the king and all the royal family. It was rumored *through the streets* that the Royalists were endeavoring to provoke the people to rise, that they might shoot them down with artillery. The mayor issued a proclamation urging the people not to allow themselves to be excited to fresh commotions. The king issued a proclamation, spirited and defiant in its tone, and yet calculated only to exasperate those whom he had no power to restrain.[330]

La Fayette, who was at this time with his division of the army on the frontiers, heard these tidings from Paris with intense alarm. Had the court not prevented his election as mayor, the outrages of the 20th of June could not have occurred. His only hope for France was in the Constitution. The invasion of the Legislative Assembly by the mob, the irruption into the palace, and the outrages inflicted upon the royal family, impressed him with shame and horror. He saw the terrific reign of anarchy approaching, and was fully conscious that no one could attempt to resist the popular torrent but at the peril of his life. He wrote a very earnest letter of remonstrance to the Assembly, and resolved to hasten immediately to Paris, and to brave every possible danger in endeavoring to restore to his country the dominion of law. Making all the arrangements in his power, that his temporary absence might not be detrimental to the military operations then in progress, he set out for the capital, and arrived there on the 28th of June.[331] He thought that he might rely upon the National Guard to aid him in maintaining the Constitution, and that, throwing himself into the breach to save the monarchy and the king, he might place some reliance upon the co-operation of the court. But the court hated La Fayette and constitutional liberty, and wished for no assistance but from the armies of the allies, through whom they might dictate terms to the re-enslaved people.

La Fayette, immediately upon his arrival in Paris, sent a message to the Assembly that he wished for permission to address them. At half-past one of the 28th of June, he entered the hall. The Constitutionalists received him with plaudits. The Republicans, both the Girondists and the Jacobins, were silent. The general, in his bold and spirited address, spoke of the

disgrace which the outrages of the 20th of June had brought upon the nation, and the indignation which it had excited in the army, and urged that the instigators of the riot should be prosecuted; that the Jacobin Club, ever urging violence and revolution, should be suppressed; and that the Constitution and the laws should be maintained by all the armed force of the government.

This speech introduced an angry debate, in which La Fayette was reproached with neglecting his own duties in the army to meddle with matters in which he had no concern. La Fayette left the Assembly in the midst of the debate, and repaired to the palace to see what assistance he could render to the king and queen. The courtiers surrounding the monarch, with their wonted infatuation, assailed La Fayette with the most abusive epithets. The king and queen received him with great coldness, and refused to accept from him of any sympathy or aid.

"If the court and the people attached to the king," writes the Marquis de Ferrières, a decided Royalist, "had but resolved to support La Fayette, there was force to have annihilated the two factions. But the queen recoiled from any idea of owing her safety to a man whom she had resolved to ruin. They refused to enter into his views, and they thus rejected the only means of safety that Providence offered them. Inexplicable blindness, if an explanation were not afforded by the approaching entry of the foreign troops and the confidence reposed in them."

The historian Toulongeon, describing these events, says, "Retired to his hotel, La Fayette set himself to consider what was the force of which he could avail himself. A review of the first division of the National Guard was fixed for the next morning at break of day. The king was to pass along the line, and La Fayette was then to harangue the troops. But the mayor, Pétion, *was advertised of their movements by the queen*, who feared the success of La Fayette even more than that of the Jacobins, and a counter-order was given, and the review did *not* take place."

La Fayette returned to the army thwarted and disheartened. His retirement in despair from Paris was the last expiring sigh of the Constitutional party. From this moment the Jacobins resolved upon his destruction, and that very evening his effigy was burned at the Palais Royal. Bertrand de Moleville, one of the most false and envenomed of the

Royalist writers, condemns La Fayette for thus leaving Paris. But even Professor Smyth, whose English sympathies are strongly with the court, exclaims,

> "M. Bertrand de Moleville may surely be asked, on this occasion, what resource was left for La Fayette but to move away from Paris, if the king and the court, for whom he was hazarding both his fame and his safety, would not honor him with the slightest countenance? Was it to be endured that they were to seem neutral and indifferent, at the least, and sitting with folded arms, while he was to be left to rush into a combat in the Assembly and in the streets of Paris with their furious and murderous enemies, and with the men who had just been assailing the king in his palace, and who evidently only waited for an opportunity to rob him of his crown and take away his life; was this, I repeat, to be endured? Many are the sensations by which the heart of man may be alienated and imbittered, but there are few more fitted for that purpose than to find indifference to services offered, and ingratitude for sacrifices made."[332]

Both the king and the queen knew that Prussia had already combined with Austria, and was secretly marching an army of eighty thousand men under the Duke of Brunswick to unite with the emigrants at Coblentz. The queen thought that the allies would be in Paris in six weeks. She was minutely informed of their contemplated movements; when they would be at Verdun, when at Lille; and she, in confidence, informed her ladies that she expected to be rescued in a month.[333]

The peril of France was now truly great, and the patriots were deeply agitated. Foreign armies were approaching. The king not only was taking no effectual measures for the defense of the kingdom, but had vetoed the decrees of the Assembly raising an army for the protection of the capital, and was also believed to be in sympathy and in traitorous correspondence with the foe. France was threatened with invasion, and the court of France was virtually guiding the march of the invading armies, weakening every point of defense, and striving to betray the patriot forces into the hands of

the enemy. The only excuse which history can offer for the king is, that he was the tool of others, and so weak and characterless that he was unconscious of the enormity of his crime. But this excuse, which ought to have commended him to pity, could not be an argument for maintaining him upon his throne.

Though it was well known to all intelligent men that the Prussian armies were marching to unite with the Austrian for the invasion of France, yet the king, in grossest violation of duty, had made no communication of the fact to the Legislative Assembly. All the great roads were crowded with priests, nobles, and their partisans, hastening to join the emigrants at Coblentz. Couriers were every where traversing Europe, from St. Petersburg to Rome, from Stockholm to Madrid, from Berlin to Naples, openly announcing the coalition of all Europe to crush the revolution in France, and declaring that the armies would move in such force that the French would not be able to resist them for a single month. The allies were not unwilling to have their plans known and even exaggerated, for some of them hoped that the terror of the threat might be sufficient to drive the French patriots to submission.[334]

It was consequently proclaimed, not officially, but with great soundings of trumpets, that Spain was to indemnify herself for the war by taking possession of the four beautiful southern provinces of France which lean against the Pyrenees—Navarre, Roussillon, Languedoc, and Guienne. The King of Sardinia was to receive the provinces adjacent to his kingdom, whose romantic valleys penetrated the lower Alps—Dauphiny, Provence, Lyonnois, and Bretagne. The Stadtholder of Holland was to extend his sway over the Provinces of Flanders and Picardy. Austria was to grasp the provinces adjoining the Rhine—Alsace, Lorraine, Champagne. The Swiss were offered Franche Comte if they would join the coalition. And, finally, England was to regain her old possession of Normandy, and was to seize all the colonial possessions of France in the two Indies.[335]

Though the British *government* was at this time strongly in sympathy with the coalition, it did not venture openly to join the alliance, for the masses of the British *people* were cordially with the French patriots and rejoiced in the establishment of constitutional liberty in France. These extravagant threats filled Europe. It was every where assumed that only a

small minority of the French people were opposed to the Old Régime, and that the mass of the nation would at once arise and welcome the invading armies.

With this terrific storm from without menacing the liberties of France, a large number of priests who had refused to accept the Constitution were plying all the energies of the most potent superstition earth has ever known to rouse the ignorant peasantry against civil and religious liberty. They were told that eternal damnation was their inevitable doom if they were not willing to lay down their lives in defense of the king and the Pope; and that eternal blessedness was the sure inheritance of all who should labor and pray for holy mother Church. The queen, it was well known, was in constant conference with the enemy, counseling, encouraging, and aiding with all the pecuniary means she could obtain from the revenues of France. The king was a weak-minded, fickle man, with no decision of his own, and entirely at the disposal of those who surrounded him. Being quite in subjection to the imperial mind of the queen, he delayed adopting any vigorous measure to repel the approaching foe, thwarted the decrees of the Assembly, and allowed his own enormous salary of six millions of dollars to be appropriated by the queen and her counselors to hasten the march of foreign invaders upon Paris.

In the very palace of the Tuileries a secret committee of old Royalists were in session every day, planning for the enemy, informing them of all the movements in Paris, advising them as to the best points of attack, and organizing, in different parts of the empire, their partisans to rise in civil war the moment the first thunderings of hostile artillery should be heard upon the plains of France. Here surely was a combination of wrong and outrage sufficient to drive any people mad.[336]

During the whole month of July the interior of the palace was the abode of terror. The inmates, apprehensive every hour of attack, had no repose by day or night. Almost daily there was an alarm that the mob was gathering. "During the whole month," writes Madame Campan, "I was never once in bed. I always dreaded some night attack. One morning, about one o'clock, footsteps were heard in the anteroom of the queen's chamber, and then a violent struggle and loud outcries, as the groom of the

chambers grasped a man who was stealthily approaching with a dagger, apparently to assassinate the queen."

"I begin to fear," said the queen one day, "that they will bring the king to a trial. Me they will assassinate. But what will become of our poor children? If they assassinate me, so much the better; they will rid me of an existence that is painful."

"One morning, at about four o'clock, near the close of July," writes Madame Campan, "a person came to give me information that the Faubourg St. Antoine was preparing to march against the palace. We knew that at least an hour must elapse before the populace, assembled upon the site of the Bastille, could reach the Tuileries. It seemed to me sufficient for the queen's safety that all about her should be awakened. I went softly into her room. She was asleep. I did not awaken her.

"The king had been awakened, and so had Madame Elizabeth, who had gone to him. The queen, yielding to the weight of her griefs, slept till nine o'clock on that day, which was very unusual with her. The king had already been to know whether she was awake. I told him what I had done, and the care I had taken not to disturb her rest. He thanked me, and said,

"'I was awake, and so was the whole palace. She ran no risk. I am very glad to see her take a little rest. Alas! her griefs double mine.'

"What was my chagrin, when the queen, awaking and learning what had passed, began to weep bitterly from regret at not having been called. In vain did I reiterate that it was only a false alarm, and that she required to have her strength recruited.

"'My strength is not exhausted,' said she; 'misfortune gives us additional strength. Elizabeth was with the king, and I was asleep! I, who am determined to perish by his side. I am his wife. I will not suffer him to incur the smallest risk without my sharing it.'"

The queen appears to have understood very perfectly the character of her dejected, spiritless, long-suffering husband. "The king," said she, "is not a coward. He possesses abundance of passive courage, but he is overwhelmed by an awkward shyness, a mistrust of himself, which proceeds from his education as much as from his disposition. He is afraid to command, and, above all things, dreads speaking to assembled numbers. He lived like a child, and always ill at ease, under the eyes of Louis XV., until the age of twenty-one. This constraint confirmed his timidity.

Circumstanced as we are, a few well-delivered words addressed to the Parisians would multiply the strength of our party a hundred-fold. He will not utter them. What can be expected from those addresses to the people which he has been advised to post up? Nothing but fresh outrages. As for myself, I could do any thing, and would appear on horseback if necessary; but, if I really were to begin to act, that would be furnishing arms to the king's enemies. The cry against *the Austrian*, and against the sway of a female, would become general in France, and, moreover, by showing myself I should render the king a mere nothing. A queen who is not regent ought, under these circumstances, to remain passive or to die."[337]

There were now three prominent parties in France. First, the Royalists, with the queen and the court, controlling the ever-vacillating king, at their head. They were plotting, through foreign armies and civil war, to restore the political and ecclesiastical despotism of the Old Régime. This party would have been utterly powerless but for the aid of foreign despots. Second came the Constitutional party, with La Fayette at its head. The king *professed* to belong to this party, and at times, perhaps, with sincerity, but, overruled by others, he conducted with a degree of feebleness and fickleness which amounted to treachery. This party had originally embraced nearly the whole nation. Never did a nobler set of men undertake national reform than were the leaders of the French Revolution. They sought only the happiness of France, were anxious for peace with all nations, were decidedly conservative in their views. They had no desire to overthrow the French monarchy, but wished only to limit that monarchy by a Constitution which should secure to the nation civil and religious liberty.

But the Constitutional party was now daily growing weaker, simply because its best friends saw that it was impossible to maintain the Constitution while the king himself was co-operating with foreign armies for its overthrow. Why should the people sustain a king, and furnish him with a salary of five millions of dollars a year, only to enable him to overthrow the Constitution and reinstate the rejected despotism? Thus were thousands of the purest men in France driven with great reluctance to the conviction that constitutional liberty could only be preserved by dethroning the king and establishing a republic. They were originally decidedly in favor of a constitutional monarchy. They felt that the

transition was altogether too great and too sudden from utter despotism to republican freedom. The vast mass of the peasant population in France could neither read nor write. They were totally unacquainted with the forms of popular government. They were as ignorant as children, and almost entirely under the tutelage of the priests, to whom they believed that the keys of heaven and of hell had been intrusted. The establishment of republican forms would render France still more obnoxious to surrounding monarchies, and therefore they had wished to maintain the monarchy, and they took the British Constitution and not the American republic as their model, wishing, however, to infuse more of the popular element into their Constitution than has been admitted into the aristocratic institutions of England.

But now they found, to their surprise and grief, that all Europe was combining against their liberties, and that the king, instead of being grateful that his throne was preserved to him, was lamenting his loss of despotic power, and was co-operating with combined Europe for the re-enslavement of France. This left the friends of liberty no alternative. They must either hold out their hands to have the irons riveted upon them anew, or they must dethrone the king, rouse the nation to repel invasion, and attempt the fearful experiment of a republican government with a nation turbulent, unenlightened, and totally unaccustomed to self-control. In the old despotism there was no hope. It presented but poverty, chains, and despair. In republicanism, with all its perils, there was at least *hope*. Hence arose republicanism. It was the child of necessity. In the Constituent Assembly not an individual was to be found who advocated a republic.[338] But after the flight of the king to Varennes, republican sentiments, as the only hope of the nation, rapidly gained ground, and at the very commencement of the Legislative Assembly we see that a republican party is already organized. From the beginning there were two divisions of this party—the conservative republicans, called Girondists, because their leaders were from the department of the Gironde; and the radical democrats, called Jacobins from the hall where the club held its meeting.

All France was now in a state of alarm. The Assembly passed a very solemn decree announcing that *the country is in danger*. It declared its sitting to be permanent, that the king might not dissolve it. All the citizens

were required to give up their arms that they might be suitably distributed to the defenders of the country. Every man, old and young, capable of bearing arms was ordered to be enrolled in the National Guards for the public defense. M. Vergniaud, the leader of the Girondists, a man of exalted virtue and of marvelous powers of eloquence, concluded a speech which roused the enthusiasm of the whole Assembly by proposing a firm but respectful message to Louis XVI., which should oblige him to choose between France and foreigners, and which should teach him that the French were resolved to perish or triumph with the Constitution.

"It is in the name of *the king*," said Vergniaud, "that the French princes have endeavored to raise up Europe against us. It is to avenge the *dignity of the king* that the treaty of Pilnitz has been concluded. It is to come to the *aid of the king* that the sovereign of Hungary and Bohemia makes war upon us, and that Prussia is marching toward our frontiers. Now, I read in the Constitution,

> "'If the king puts himself at the head of an army and directs its forces against the nation, or if he does not oppose by a formal act an enterprise of this kind, that may be executed in his name, he shall be considered as having abdicated royalty.'
>
> "What is a formal act of opposition? If one hundred thousand Austrians were marching toward Flanders, and one hundred thousand Prussians toward Alsace, and the king were to oppose to them ten or twenty thousand men, would he have done a formal act of opposition? If the king, whose duty it is to notify us of imminent hostilities, apprised of the movements of the Prussian army, were not to communicate any information upon the subject to the National Assembly; if a camp of reserve necessary for stopping the progress of the enemy into the interior were proposed, and the king were to substitute in its stead an uncertain plan which it would take a long time to execute; if the king were to leave the command of an army to an intriguing general (La Fayette) of whom the nation was suspicious. If another general (Luckner) familiar with victory were to demand a re-enforcement, and the king

were by a refusal to say to him, *I forbid thee to conquer*, could it be asserted that the king had performed a formal act of opposition.

"If while France were swimming in blood the king were to say to you, 'It is true that the enemies pretend to be acting for me, for my dignity, for my rights, but I have proved that I am not the accomplice. I have sent armies into the field; these armies were too weak, but the Constitution does not fix the degree of their force. I have assembled them too late; but the Constitution does not fix the time for collecting them. I have stopped a general who was on the point of conquering, but the Constitution does not order victories. I have had ministers who deceived the Assembly and disorganized the government, but their appointment belonged to me. The Assembly has passed useful decrees which I have not sanctioned, but I had a right to act so. I have done all that the Constitution enjoined me. It is therefore impossible to doubt my fidelity to it.'

"If the king were to hold this language would you not have a right to reply, 'O king, who, like Lysander, the tyrant, have believed that truth was not worth more than falsehood, who have feigned a love for the laws, merely to preserve the power which enabled you to defy them—was it defending us to oppose to the foreign soldiers forces whose inferiority left not even uncertainty as to their defeat? Was it defending us to thwart plans tending to fortify the interior? Was it defending us not to check a general who violated the Constitution, but to enchain the courage of those who were serving it? No! no! man, in whom the generosity of the French has excited no corresponding feeling, insensible to every thing but the love of despotism, you are henceforth nothing to that Constitution which you have so unworthily violated, nothing to that people which you have so basely betrayed.'"

This was the first time any one had ventured to speak in the Assembly of the forfeiture of the crown, though it was a common topic in the journals and in the streets. The speech of Vergniaud was received with vehement applause. The king, alarmed, immediately sent a message to the Assembly informing them that Prussia had allied her troops with those of Austria in their march upon France. This message, thus tardily extorted, was received by the Assembly with a smile of contempt.

It was now manifest, beyond all dispute, that the foe of French liberty most to be dreaded was the king and the court. M. Brissot, who had been the bosom friend and the ardent eulogist of La Fayette, could no longer sustain the king. Ascending the tribune he gave bold utterance to the sentiment of the nation.

"Our peril," said he, "exceeds all that past ages have witnessed. The country is in danger, not because we are in want of troops—not because those troops want courage. No! it is in danger because its force is paralyzed. And who has paralyzed it. A man—*one man*, the man whom the Constitution has made its chief, and whom perfidious advisers have made its foe. You are told to fear the Kings of Prussia and Hungary; I say the chief force of those kings is *at the court*, and it is *there* we must first conquer them. They tell you to strike at the dissentient priests. I tell you to strike at the *Tuileries*, and fell all the priests with a single blow. You are told to persecute all factious and intriguing conspirators. They will all disappear if you knock loud enough at the door of the *Cabinet of the Tuileries*; for that cabinet is the point to which all these threads tend, where every scheme is plotted, and whence every impulse proceeds. This is the secret of our position; this is the source of the evil, and here the remedy must be applied."[339]

FOOTNOTES:

330. "Immediately after the 20th of June," writes Madame Campan, "the queen lost all hope but from foreign succors. She wrote to implore her own family, and the brothers of the king; and her letters became probably more and more pressing, and expressed her fears from the tardy manner in which the succors seemed to approach."—*Memoirs of Marie Antoinette, by Madame Campan*, vol. ii., p. 214.

331. "Marshal Luckner blamed extremely the intention La Fayette announced of repairing to Paris, 'because,' said he, 'the *sans culottes* (ragamuffins) will cut off his head.' But as this was

the sole objection he made, the general resolved to set out alone."—*La Fayette's Memoirs.*

332. Lectures on the French Revolution, vol. ii., p. 296. "The queen and the court," writes Prof. Smyth, "could never endure La Fayette, as having been the first great mover and originator of the Revolution; the cause, as he thought, of the liberties of his country, but a cause with which they unfortunately had no sympathy."

"The queen said to me," writes Madame Campan, "that La Fayette was offered to them as a resource, but that it would be better for them to perish than to owe their safety to a man who had done them the most mischief, or to place themselves under the necessity of treating with him."—*Mémoires of Marie Antoinette, by Madame Campan*, vol. ii., p. 223.

333. Thiers, vol. i., p. 278.

334. "The king had committed himself, on the subject of the Constitution, to the allied powers, in the instructions he had given to Mallet du Pan, and was no longer at liberty, even if he had been disposed, on account of any such object as the Constitution, to have united himself with La Fayette, not even though La Fayette was endeavoring to accomplish the great point, of all others to be most desired, the overthrow of the Girondists and the Jacobins. On the whole, the court must be considered as now preferring the chance of the invasion of the allied powers, and the king the chance of some mediation between them and the people of France, that is, the chance of better terms than the Constitution offered. This must, I think, be supposed the line of policy that was now adopted. It was one full of danger, and, on the whole, a mistake; but with the expectation that was then so generally entertained of the certain success of the allied powers, a mistake not unnatural."—*Prof. Smyth's Lectures*, vol. ii., p. 295.

335. Hist. Phil. de la Rev. de Fr., par Ant. Fantin Desodoards, t. ii., p. 45.

336. "A court apparently in concert with the enemy resorted to no means for augmenting the armies and exciting the nation, but, on the contrary, employed the *veto* to thwart the measures of the legislative body, and the *civil list* (the king's salary) to secure partisans in the interior."—*Thiers*, vol. i., p. 280.

337. Madame Campan, vol. ii., p. 230.

338. "It becomes evident that a republic was desired only from despair of the monarchy, that it never was a fixed fact, and that, on the very eve of attaining it, those who were accused of having long paved the way to it, would not sacrifice the public weal for its sake, but would have consented to a constitutional monarchy, if it were accompanied with sufficient safeguards."—*Thiers*, vol. i., p. 308.

339. M. Brissot was a lawyer of considerable literary distinction, who, when but twenty years of age, had been imprisoned in the Bastille for some of his political writings. He was a passionate admirer of the Americans, and despairing, in consequence of the fickleness or treachery of the king, of a constitutional monarchy, endeavored to secure for France a republic. About a year from the time of the above speech he perished with the rest of the Girondists upon the scaffold.—*Biographe Moderne.*

Chapter XXVII.
The Throne Demolished

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> The Country proclaimed in Danger.—Plan of La Fayette for the Safety of the Royal Family.—Measures of the Court.—Celebration of the Demolition of the Bastille.—Movement of the Allied Army.—Conflicting Plans of the People.—Letter of the Girondists to the King.—Manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick.—Unpopularity of La Fayette.—The Attack upon the Tuileries, Aug. 10th.—The Royal Family take Refuge in the Assembly.

The danger to which the country was exposed had now united Constitutionalists and Republicans, or rather had compelled most of the Constitutionalists to become Republicans. A patriotic bishop, whose soul was glowing with the spirit of true Christian fraternity, addressed the Assembly in an appeal so moving, that, like reconciled brothers, the two parties rushed into each other's arms to unite in the defense of that liberty which was equally dear to them all

On the 11th of July the solemn proclamation was made with great pomp through the streets of Paris and of France, that *the country was in danger*. Minute guns were fired all the day. The bells tolled, and the reveille was beat in all quarters of the city summoning the National Guard to their posts. A cavalcade of horse paraded the streets with a large banner containing the inscription, *Citizens, the country is in danger*. At all the principal places the cortège? halted and the legislative decree was read. Rendezvous were established in all parts of the city for the enlistment of volunteers. Unparalleled enthusiasm pervaded all classes. In Paris alone fifteen thousand were enrolled the first day.

Petitions were poured in upon the Assembly from all parts of the empire declaring that the king had forfeited the crown, and demanding his dethronement. This sudden change, these bold utterances, threw the court into consternation. The king's life now was in imminent peril, and he

resolved if possible to effect his escape. Several plans were suggested which seemed to him, with his constitutional feebleness of purpose, too hazardous to be undertaken. La Fayette, with generous credulity, still tried to believe the king sincere in his acceptance of constitutional liberty, and he proposed a plan which would have saved the king and would have saved France had there been a particle of sincerity in the bosom of the monarch. It was most noble in La Fayette thus to forget the insults he had received from the court, and to peril his life in the endeavor to save a family who had only loaded him with injuries. His plan, boldly conceived, was as patriotic as it was humane, and needed but sincerity on the part of the king to secure its triumphant execution. It was an amiable weakness on the part of La Fayette still to believe that the king could by any possibility be led to espouse the Revolution. His proposition was briefly this:

THE COUNTRY PROCLAIMED IN DANGER.

"General Luckner and I," said he to the king, "will come to Paris to attend the celebration of the demolition of the Bastille on the 14th of July. In company with us, the next day, the king with his family shall visit Compiègne, fifty miles north of Paris. The people will have sufficient confidence in us to make no opposition. Should there be opposition we will have a sufficient force of dragoons at hand to strike by surprise and release you. Ten squadrons of horse-artillery shall there receive the monarch and conduct him to the army on the frontiers. The king shall then issue a decided proclamation forbidding his brothers and the emigrants to advance another step toward the invasion of France, declaring, in terms which can not be misinterpreted, his determination to maintain the Constitution, and announcing his readiness to place himself at the head of the army to repel the enemy. This decisive measure will satisfy France that the king is its friend not its foe. The allies can make no headway against France united under its monarch. The king can then return triumphant to Paris, amid the universal acclamations of the people, a constitutional monarch beloved and revered by his subjects."[340]

This was the wisest course which, under the circumstances, could possibly have been pursued. It was constitutional. It would have been the salvation of the king and of France. Many of the king's personal friends entreated him, with tears, to repose confidence in La Fayette, and to comply with the counsels of the only man who could rescue him from destruction. But the fickle-minded king was now in the hands of the queen and the courtiers, and was guided at their pleasure. All their hopes were founded in the re-establishment of despotism by foreign invasion. The generous plan of La Fayette was rejected with a cold and almost insulting repulse.

"The best advice," replied the king, "which can be given to La Fayette is to continue to serve as a bugbear to the factions by the able performance of his duty as a general."

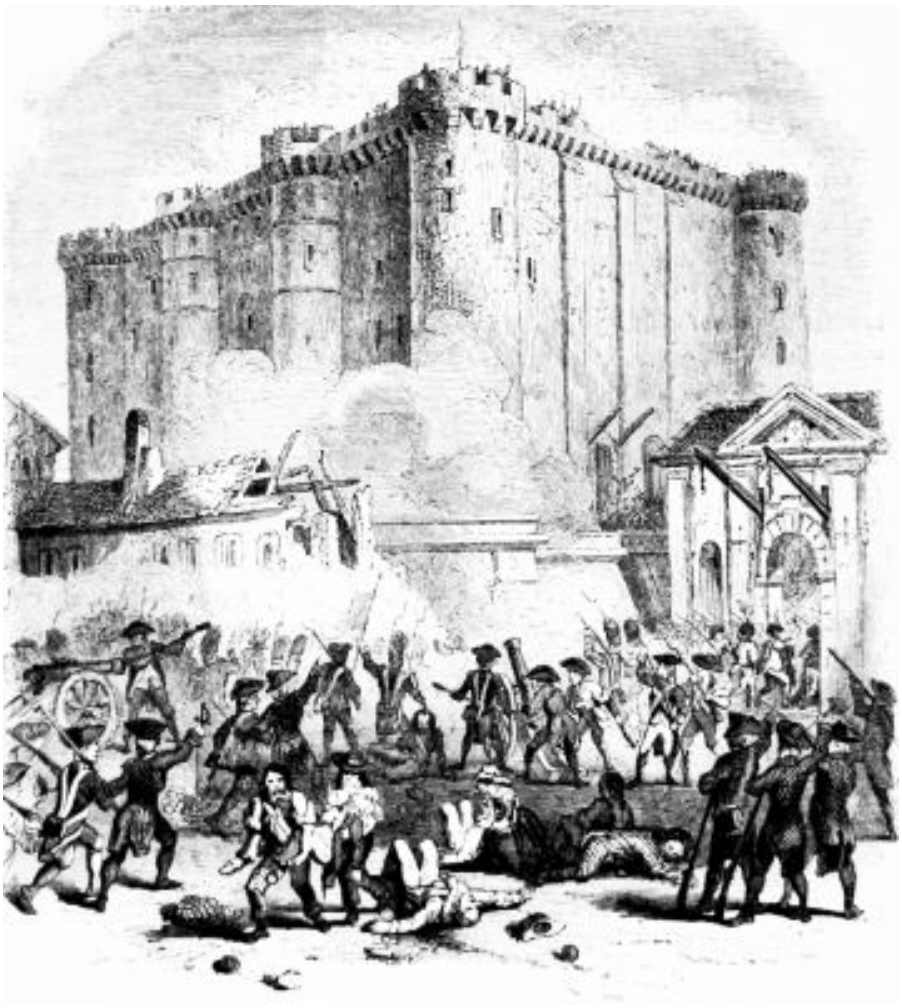
The queen was so confident that in a few weeks the allied armies would be in Paris, and that any acts of disrespect on the part of the people would only tend to hasten their march, that when Colombe, the aid-de-camp of La Fayette, remonstrated against the infatuation of so fatal a decision, she replied, "We are much obliged to your general for his offer,

but the best thing which could happen to us would be to be confined for two months in a tower."

When La Fayette was thus periling his life to save the royal family he knew that, by the queen's orders, pamphlets filled with calumny were composed against him, and were paid for out of the king's salary.[341]

The court was secretly and very energetically recruiting defenders for the approaching crisis. They had assembled at the Tuileries a regiment of Swiss mercenaries, amounting to about a thousand men, who, under rigid military discipline, would be faithful to the king. A large number of general and subaltern officers, strong royalists, were provided with lodgings in Paris, awaiting any emergence. Several hundred royalist gentlemen from the provinces, in chivalrous devotion to the monarchy, were residing in hotels near the Tuileries, always provided with concealed weapons, and with cards which gave them admission at any hour into the palace. Secret bodies of loyalists were organized in the city, who were also ready to rush, at a given signal, to the defense of the inmates of the Tuileries. The servants in the chateaux were very numerous, and were all picked men. There were also in garrison in Paris ten thousand troops of the line who were devoted to the king.

With such resources immediately at hand, and with nearly all the monarchies of Europe in alliance to march to their rescue, it is not surprising that the king and queen should have felt emboldened to brave the perils which surrounded them.[342] The Royalists were exultant, and already, in the provinces of La Vendée and on the Rhone, they had unfurled the white banner of the Bourbons, were rallying around it by thousands, and had commenced the slaughter of the patriots who, in these provinces, were in the minority.



STORMING THE BASTILLE.

Such was the state of affairs when the 14th of July arrived, the day for the great celebration of the demolition of the Bastille. The king and queen could not avoid participating in the ceremonies, though it was greatly feared that attempts might be made for their assassination. A breast-plate, in the form of an under waistcoat, was secretly made for the king, consisting of fifteen folds of Italian silk, strongly quilted, which was found, upon trial, to be proof against dagger or bullet. Madame Campan wore it for three days before an opportunity could be found for the king to try it on unperceived. The king, as he drew it on, said,

"It is to satisfy the queen that I submit to this inconvenience."

A corset of similar material was also prepared for the queen. She, however, refused to wear it, saying, "If the rebels assassinate me it will be

a most happy event. It will release me from the most sorrowful existence, and may save from a cruel death the rest of the family."

The Field of Mars was the site for the festival. Eighty-three gorgeous tents were reared, representing the eighty-three departments of France. Before each of these was planted a tree of liberty, from the tops of which waved the tricolored banner. On one side of this vast parade-ground there was an immense tree planted, called the tree of feudalism. Its boughs were laden with memorials of ancient pride and oppression—blue ribbons, tiaras, cardinals' hats, St. Peter's keys, ermine, mantles, titles of nobility, escutcheons, coats of arms, etc. It was in the programme of the day that the king, after taking anew the oath of fidelity to the Constitution, was to set fire to the tree of feudalism with all its burden of hoary abuses.

The king and royal family joined the procession at the Tuileries, and with saddened hearts and melancholy countenances performed their part in the ceremonies. "The expression of the queen's countenance," says Madame de Staël, "on this day will never be effaced from my remembrance. Her eyes were swollen with tears, and the splendor of her dress and the dignity of her deportment formed a striking contrast with the train that surrounded her."

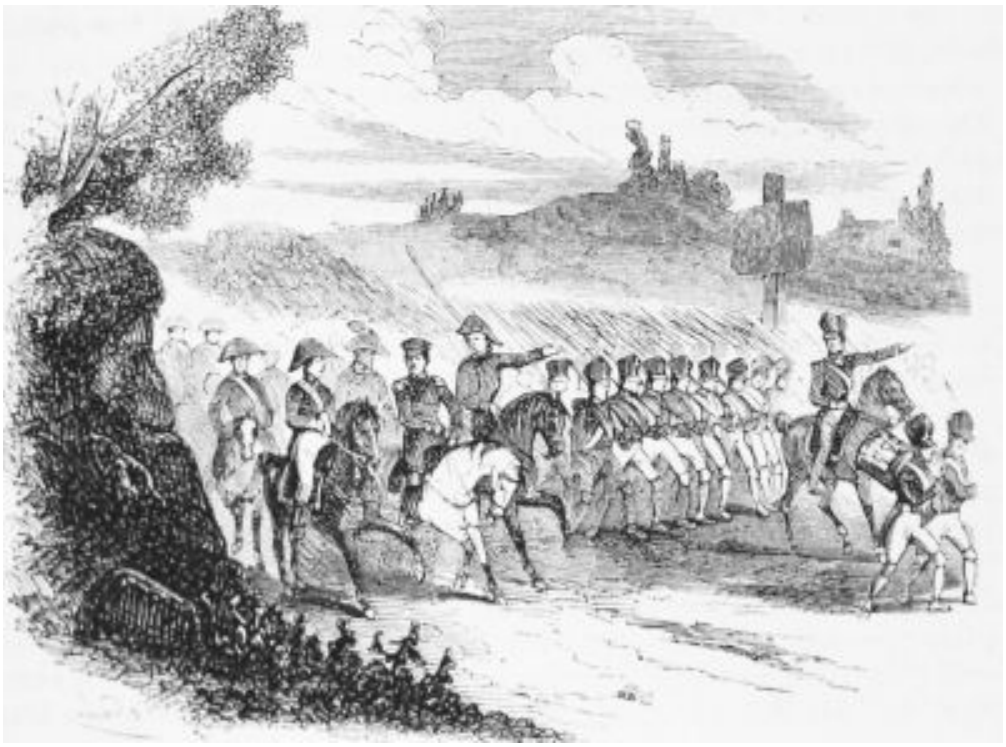
When the procession arrived at the Field of Mars, where an immense concourse was assembled, the queen took her station upon a balcony which was provided for her, while the king was conducted slowly through the almost impenetrable throng to the altar where the oath was to be administered. The queen narrowly and anxiously watched his progress with a glass. In ascending the altar the monarch took a false step, and seemed to fall. The queen, thinking he had been struck by a dagger, uttered a shriek of terror, which pierced the hearts of all around her. The king, however, ascended the altar, and took the oath.

The people wished him then to set fire to the feudal tree. But he declined, very pertinently remarking that there was no longer any feudalism in France. Some of the deputies of the Assembly then lighted the pile, and as it was wreathed in flames the shoutings of the multitude testified their joy. The partisans of the king succeeded in raising a few shouts of *Vive le Roi*, which lighted up a momentary smile upon the wan face of the king. But these were the last flickering gleams of joy. The royal family returned in deepest dejection to the palace. They were conscious

that they had but performed the part of captives in gracing a triumph, and they never again appeared in the streets of Paris until they were led to their execution.

The alarming decree of the Assembly that *the country was in danger*, and the call for every man to arm, had thrown all France into commotion. The restless, violent, and irresponsible are ever the first to volunteer for war. These were rapidly organized in the departments into regiments and battalions, and sent on to Paris. Thus, notwithstanding the veto of the king, an immense force was fast gathering in the capital, and a force who felt that the king himself was the secret treacherous foe from whom they had the most to fear. The Assembly, dreading conspiracy at home more than open war from abroad, now sent the king's troops, upon whose fidelity to the nation they could not rely, to the frontiers. The court opposed this measure, as they did not wish to strengthen even the feeble resistance which they supposed the allies would have to encounter, and also wished to retain these troops for their own protection against any desperate insurrection of the people. The king consequently wished to interpose his veto, but was advised that he could not safely adopt that measure in the then exasperated state of the public mind. The removal of these troops very decidedly weakened the strength of the Royalists in Paris.

Such was the state of affairs on the 28th of July, when the allied army, amounting in its three great divisions to one hundred and thirty-eight thousand men, commenced its march upon France.



THE PRUSSIANS CROSSING THE FRONTIERS OF FRANCE.

The Duke of Brunswick was to pass the Rhine at Coblentz, ascend the left bank of the Moselle, and march upon Paris by the route of Longwy, Verdun, and Chalons. His immense force of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, with its enormous array of heavy guns and its long lines of baggage and munition wagons, covered a space of forty miles. The Prince of Hohenlohe, marching in a parallel line some twenty miles on his left, led a division of the emigrants and the Hessian troops. His route led him through Thionville and Metz. The Count de Clairfayt, an Austrian field-marshal, who has been esteemed the ablest general opposed to the French during the Revolutionary war, conducted the Austrian troops and another division of the emigrants along other parallel roads upon the right, to fall upon La Fayette, who was stationed before Sedan and Mézieres. It was supposed that he would easily scatter the feeble forces which Louis XVI. had permitted to be stationed there; and then he was to press rapidly upon Paris by Rheims and Soissons.[343]

The friends of liberty now saw no possible way of rescuing France from its peril and of saving themselves from the scaffold, but by wresting the executive power from the king and the court, who were in co-operation

with the foe. This could only be done by a *revolution*, for the Constitution conferred no right upon the Assembly to dethrone the king. The Girondists or moderate Republicans, detesting the Jacobins and appalled in view of the anarchy which would ensue from arming the mob of Paris, wished to have the *Assembly* usurp the power and dethrone the king. The Jacobins, who hoped to ride into authority upon the waves of popular tumult, deliberately resolved to demolish the throne by hurling against it the infuriate masses of the people. It was calling into action the terrible energies of the earthquake and the tornado, knowing that their ravages, once commenced, could be arrested by no earthly power.

The plan first formed was to rouse the people in resistless numbers, march upon the Tuileries, take the king a prisoner, and hold him in the Castle of Vincennes as a hostage for the good conduct of the emigrants and the allies. The appointed day came, and Paris was thrown into a state of terrible confusion. But the court had been admonished of the movement. The palace was strongly defended, and in consequence of some misunderstanding it was found that there was not sufficient concert of action to attempt the enterprise.

A new scheme was now formed, energetic and well-adapted to the effectual accomplishment of its purpose. At the ringing of the tocsin forty thousand men were to be marshaled in the faubourg St. Antoine. Another immense gathering of the populace was to rally in the faubourg St. Marceau. All the troops in the metropolis from the provinces were to be arrayed at the encampment of the Marseilles battalion. They were then to march simultaneously to the palace, fill the garden and the court of the Carrousel, and invest the Tuileries on all sides. Here they were to encamp with all the enginery of war, and fortify their position by ditches, barricades, and redoubts. No blood was to be shed. There was to be no assault upon the palace, and no forcible entry. The king was to be blockaded, and the Assembly was to be informed that the populace would not lay down their arms until the king was dethroned, and the Legislature had adopted measures to secure the safety of the country.[344] In this plan there was something generous and sublime. It endeavored to guard carefully against disorder, pillage, and blood. It was the majestic movement of the people rising in self defense against its own executive in

combination with foreign foes. Barbaroux, the leader of the Marseillese, sketches this plan in pencil. It was copied by Fournier, and adopted by Danton and Santerre.[345]

Several of the leaders of the Girondists, anxious to avert the fearful crisis now impending, wrote a noble letter to the king containing considerations just and weighty, which ought to have influenced him to corresponding action. The letter was written by Vergniaud, Gaudet, and Gensonné, three of the brightest ornaments of the Legislative Assembly.

"It ought not to be dissembled," said these men to the king, "that it is the conduct of the executive power that is the immediate cause of all the evils with which France is afflicted, and of the dangers with which the throne is surrounded. They deceive the king who would lead him to suppose that it is the effervesence of the clubs, the manœuvres of particular agitators and powerful factions that have occasioned and continued those disorderly movements, of which every day increases the violence, and of which no one can calculate the consequences. Thus to suppose is to find the cause of the evil in what are only the symptoms. The only way to establish the public tranquillity is for the king to surround himself with the confidence of his people. This can only be done by declaring, in the most solemn manner, that he will receive no augmentation of his power that shall not be freely and regularly offered him by the French nation without the assistance or interference of any foreign powers.

"What would be, perhaps, sufficient at once to re-establish confidence would be for the king to make the coalesced powers acknowledge the independence of the French nation, cease from all farther hostilities, and withdraw the troops that menace our frontiers. It is impossible that a very great part of the nation should not be persuaded that the king has it in his power to put an end to the coalition; and while that coalition continues and places the public liberty in a state of peril, it is in vain to flatter the king that confidence can revive."

The court regarded this letter as insolent, and the king returned an answer which declared that he should pay no attention whatever to its suggestions.

On the 30th of July the troops from Marseilles had arrived, five hundred in number, composed of the most fiery and turbulent spirits of the South. The clubs and journals and shouts of the people had for some time been demanding of the Assembly the suspension of the king. But the Assembly, restrained by respect for the Constitution, hesitated in the adoption of a measure so revolutionary and yet apparently so necessary. The insurrection now planned, unless it could be quelled by the king's forces, was sure to accomplish its end. If the Assembly did not in its consternation pronounce the throne vacant, or if the king did not in his terror abdicate, the whole royal family was to be held in a state of blockade, and it could not be disguised that they were in danger of falling victims to the rage of the ungovernable mob. This was the plan deliberately formed and energetically executed. It was patriotism's last and most terrible resort. Humanity is shocked by the measure. Yet we must not forget that foreign armies were approaching, and the king was in complicity with them, and thwarting all measures for effectual resistance. The court was organizing the partisans of the king to unite with the foreigners in all the horrors of civil war. A nation of twenty-five millions of freemen were again to be enslaved. All the patriots who had been instrumental in securing liberty for France were to be consigned to exile, the dungeon, and the scaffold. If ever a people were excusable in being thrown into a state of blind ungovernable fury, it was the people of France in view of such threats.

Paris was in this state of panic when the atrocious proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick reached the city. The king had sent a secret embassador, Mallet du Pan, to the allies, suggesting the tone of the manifesto he wished them to issue. Some of his suggestions they adopted, and added to them menaces as cruel and bloody as any deeds ever perpetrated by a mob.

"Their majesties," said the duke in this manifesto, "the emperor, and the king of Prussia, having intrusted me with the command of the combined armies, assembled by their orders on the frontiers of France, I am desirous to acquaint the inhabitants of that kingdom with the motives which have determined the measures of the two sovereigns, and the intentions by which they are guided."

He then stated that one object which the sovereigns had deeply at heart was "to put an end to the anarchy in the interior of France; to stop the attacks directed against the throne and the altar, to re-establish the regal power, to restore to the king the security and liberty of which he is deprived, and to place him in a condition to exercise the legitimate authority which is his due."

He then declared, in violation of all the rules of civilized warfare, that "such of the national guards as shall have fought against the troops of the two allied courts, and who shall be taken in arms, shall be punished as rebels against their king." This doomed every French patriot who should resist the invaders to be shot or hanged.

"The inhabitants of cities, towns, and villages," continued this savage declaration, "who shall dare to defend themselves against the troops of their imperial and royal majesties, and to fire upon them either in the open field or from their houses, shall be instantly punished with all the rigor of the laws of war, and their houses demolished or burned.

"The city of Paris and all its inhabitants without distinction, are required to submit immediately to the king, to set him at entire liberty, to insure to him, as well as to all the royal personages, the inviolability and respect which subjects owe their sovereigns. Their imperial and royal majesties hold the members of the National Assembly, of the department, of the district, of the municipality, and of the National Guard of Paris, the justices of the peace, and all others whom it may concern, personally responsible with their lives for all that may happen; their said majesties declaring, moreover, on their faith and word as emperor and king, that if the palace of the Tuileries is forced or insulted, that if the least violence, the least outrage is offered to their majesties the king and queen and to the royal family, if immediate provision is not made for their safety, their preservation, and their liberty, they will take an exemplary and ever-memorable vengeance, *by giving up the city of Paris to military execution and total destruction, and the rebels guilty of outrages to the punishments they shall have deserved*."[346]

This ferocious document was printed in all the Royalist papers in Paris on the 28th of July. The king immediately issued a message disavowing any agency in the manifesto. But the people no longer had any confidence

in the word of the king. Paris was thrown into a state of terrible agitation. The forty-eight sections of Paris met, and commissioned the mayor, Pétion, to appear before the General Assembly, and petition, in their name, the dethronement of the king. On the 3d of August, Pétion, at the head of a numerous deputation, presented himself before the Assembly. In an address, calm, unimpassioned, but terrible in its severity, he retraced the whole course of the king from the commencement of the Revolution, and closed with the solemn demand for the dethronement of Louis XVI., as the most dangerous enemy of the nation. The Assembly was embarrassed by its desire to adhere to the Constitution which it had sworn to obey. The dethronement of the king was not a *constitutional* but a *revolutionary* act. A long and stormy debate ensued, during which the hall was flooded with petitions against the king. The king's friends were again intensely anxious to secure his escape. But the king would not listen to their plans, for he was so infatuated as to believe that the Duke of Brunswick would soon, by an unimpeded march, be in Paris for his rescue.

The sympathy which La Fayette had manifested for the royal family had now ruined him in the esteem of the populace. He was every where denounced as a traitor, and a strong effort was made to compel the Assembly to indite a bill of accusation against him. But La Fayette's friends in the chamber rallied, and he was absolved from the charge of treason by a vote of four hundred and forty-six against two hundred and eighty. The populace was so exasperated by this result that they heaped abuse upon all who voted in his favor, and several of them were severely maltreated by the mob. The National Assembly had now become unpopular. It was ferociously denounced in the club of the Jacobins and in all the corners of the streets. In the mean time the insurrectionary committee, formed from the Jacobin club, were busy in preparation for the great insurrection. All hearts were appalled, for all could see that a cloud of terrific blackness was gathering, and no one could tell what limit there would be to the ravages of the storm.

At midnight, on the 9th of August, the dismal sound of the tocsin was heard. From steeple to steeple the boding tones floated through the dark air. A thousand drums beat the alarm at the appointed rendezvous, and the booming of guns shook the city. In an hour all Paris was in tumult. The clatter of iron hoofs, the rumbling of heavy artillery, the tramp of

disciplined battalions, and the rush and the clamor of a phrensied mob, presented the most appalling scene of tumult and terror. A city of a million and a half of inhabitants was in convulsions. The friends of the king hurried to the palace, announcing with pale lips that the terrible hour had come. The event needed no announcement, for the whole city was instantly trembling beneath earthquake throes. The king, the queen, the two children, and Madame Elizabeth had assembled tremblingly in one of the rooms of the palace, as lambs huddle together when wolves are howling round the fold. Marie Antoinette was imperially brave, but she could not in that hour look upon her helpless son and daughter and not feel her maternal heart sink within her. Louis XVI. had the endurance of a martyr, but he could not, unmoved, contemplate the woes of his family.

The friends of the king speedily rallied, and brought up all their forces for his defense. The apartments of the palace were filled with Royalist gentlemen armed with swords, pistols, and even with shovels and tongs. Nine hundred Swiss guards, upon whom it was thought reliance could be reposed, were placed on the stairs, in the halls, and the large saloons. Six or eight hundred mounted dragoons were in one of the court-yards. Several battalions of the National Guard, who were most friendly to the king, were stationed in the garden with twelve pieces of artillery.[347] The defenders of the palace amounted in all to about four or five thousand men. But many of these were very lukewarm in their loyalty, and might at any moment be expected to fraternize with the populace.[348]

Pétion, the mayor, was sent for. He came, and after an awkward interview retired, leaving Mandat, who was general-in-chief of the National Guard, commander of the troops at the Tuileries. It was a sultry night. Every window at the Tuileries was thrown open, and the inmates listened anxiously to the uproar which rose from every part of the city. The queen and Madame Elizabeth ascended to a balcony opening from one of the highest stories of the palace. The night was calm and beautiful, the moon brilliant in the west, and Orion and the Pleiades shining serenely in the east.[349] There the queen and the princess stood for some time, trembling and in silence as the peal of bells, the clangor of drums, the rumbling of artillery wheels, and the shouts of the advancing bands, filled the air. From every direction, the east, the west, the north and the south,

the portentous booming of the tocsin was heard, and infuriated insurgents, in numbers which could not be counted, through all the streets and avenues, were pouring toward the palace. The bridges crossing the river echoed with their tread, while the blaze of bonfires and the gleam of torches added to the appalling sublimities of the scene.[350]

The queen broke the silence. Pointing to the moon she said, "Before that moon returns again, either the allies will be here and we shall be rescued, or I shall be no more. But let us descend to the king."

The spectacle seemed but to have aroused the energies of Marie Antoinette. The spirit of her imperial mother glowed in her bosom.[351] Her cheeks were pale as death, her lips were compressed, her eyes flashed fire, and, as she returned to the room where her husband stood bewildered and submissive to his lot, she approached a grenadier, drew a pistol from his belt, and, presenting it to her husband, said,

"Now, sire! now is the time to show yourself a king."

But Louis XVI. was a quiet, patient, enduring man, with nothing imperial in his nature. With the most imperturbable meekness he took the pistol and handed it back to the grenadier. The mayor, Pétion, an active member of the Jacobin Club, had manifested no disposition to render effectual aid in the defense of the palace. But lest it should seem that he was heading the mob, he had reluctantly signed an order, as he left the Tuileries, authorizing the employment of force to repel force.

The insurgents had organized an insurrectional committee at the Hôtel de Ville, and immediately sent a summons for Mandat to present himself before them. Mandat, misinformed, understood that the summons came from the municipal government, and, as in duty bound, promptly obeyed. He had hardly left the palace ere word was brought back to the king that he had been assassinated by the mob. There was no longer any leader at the palace; no one to organize the defense; no one to issue commands. The soldiers in the court of the Tuileries and in the Garden were looking listlessly about and bandying jokes with the mob who were crowding against the iron railing.[352]

It was, however, now decided that the king should descend into the courts of the Carrousel, in the rear of the palace, and into the Garden, in

front, to review the troops and ascertain the spirit with which they were animated.

The king was very fat, had an awkward hobbling gait, and a countenance only expressive of a passionless nature. He was dressed in a plain mourning-suit, with silk stockings, and buckles in his shoes. His dress was quite disarranged. In the early part of the night he had thrown himself upon a sofa for rest, and thus his hair, which was powdered and curled on one side, was without powder and in disorder on the other. Apprehensive that he might be assassinated before morning, he had spent some time in devotional exercises with his confessor, and his cheeks deathly pale, his swollen eyes and his trembling lips, plainly showed that he had been weeping. Thus he presented the aspect but of a king in his degradation. Had he been a spirited man, in uniform, mounted on horseback, he might, perhaps, have rallied the enthusiasm of the troops. As it was he could excite no other emotion than that of compassion, blended, perhaps, with contempt.

It was five o'clock of one of the most brilliant of summer mornings as the king, followed by the queen and his children, and accompanied by six staff officers, descended the marble stairs of the Tuileries and entered the royal court. The music of martial bands greeted him, the polished weapons of the soldiers gleamed in the rays of the sun as they presented arms, and a few voices rather languidly shouted *Vive le Roi*. Others, however, defiantly shouted *Vive la Nation*, thus showing that many of those who were marshaled for his defense were ready to unite with his assailants. The king stammered out a few incoherent words and returned to the palace.

The appearance of the queen in this terrible hour riveted every eye and excited even the enthusiasm of her foes. Her flushed cheek, dilated nostril, compressed lip, and flashing eye invested her with an imperial beauty almost more than human. Her head was erect, her carriage proud, her step dignified, and she looked around her upon applauding friends and assailing foes with a majesty of courage which touched every heart. Even the most ardent patriots forgot for the moment their devotion to liberty in the enthusiasm excited by the heroism of the queen. Re-entering the palace, the queen, in despair, ascended the stairs to the saloon, saying,

"All is lost. The king has shown no energy. A review like this has done us more harm than good."

The king, however, instead of ascending to his apartment, passed through the palace into the Garden to ascertain the disposition of the troops stationed there. With his small retinue he traversed the whole length of the Garden. Some of the battalions received him with applause, others were silent, while here and there voices in continually increasing numbers cried, "*Down with the veto; down with the tyrant*." As the king turned to retrace his steps, menaces and insults were multiplied. Some of the gunners even left their guns and thrust their fists in his face, assailing him with the most brutal abuse. The clamor penetrated the interior of the palace and the queen, turning pale as death, sank into a chair, exclaiming,

"Great God! they are hooting the king. We are all lost."

The king returned to the palace, pale, exhausted, perspiring at every pore, and overwhelmed with confusion and shame. He immediately retired to his cabinet. Roederer,[353] chief magistrate of the Department of the Seine, who had witnessed the hostile disposition of the troops, now hastened to the chateau and asked permission to speak to his majesty in private, with no witnesses but the royal family. He entered the royal cabinet and found the king with his elbows resting on his knees and his face buried in his hands. All retired but the royal family and the king's ministers.

"Sire," said M. Roederer, "you have not a moment to lose. Neither the number nor the disposition of the men here assembled can guarantee your life or the lives of your family. There is no safety for you but in the bosom of the Assembly."

The hall of the Assembly was in the old monastery of the Feuillants, situated on the western side of the Garden, where the Rue de Rivoli now runs. The royal family could consequently descend into the Garden, which was filled with troops collected there for their defense, and crossing the Garden could enter the hall with but little exposure.

But such a refuge to the high-spirited queen was more dreadful than death. It was draining the cup of humiliation to its dregs.

"Go to the Assembly!" exclaimed the queen; "never! never will I take refuge there. Rather than submit to such infamy I would prefer to be nailed to the walls of the palace."

"It is there only," M. Roederer replied, "that the royal family can be in safety. And it is necessary to escape immediately. In another quarter of an hour, perhaps, we shall not be able to command a retreat."

"What," rejoined the queen, "have we no defenders? Are we alone?"

"Yes, madame," replied Roederer, "we are alone. The troops in the Garden and in the court are fraternizing with your assailants and turning their guns against the palace. All Paris is on the march. Action is useless. Resistance is impossible."

A gentleman present, who had been active in promoting reform, ventured to add his voice in favor of an immediate retreat to the Assembly. The queen turned upon him sternly, and said,

"Silence, sir, silence! It becomes you to be silent here. When the mischief is done, those who did it should not pretend to wish to remedy it."[354]

M. Roederer resumed, saying, "Madame, you endanger the lives of your husband and your children. Think of the responsibility which you take upon yourself."

The king raised his head, fixed a vacant stare of anguish for a moment on M. Roederer, and then, rising, said, "Marchons" (*Let us go*).

The queen, unable any longer to shut her eyes to the fatality, turning to M. Roederer, eagerly added, "You, sir, are answerable for the life of the king and for that of my son."

"Madame," M. Roederer replied, "we undertake to die by your side, but that is all we can promise." It was then eight o'clock in the morning.

A guard of soldiers was instantly called in, and the melancholy cortège left the palace. The Swiss troops and the loyalist gentlemen, who filled the apartments, looked on in consternation and despair. There was no apparent escape for them, and they seemed to be abandoned to their fate. As the king was crossing the threshold he thought of his friends, and his heart seemed to misgive him. He hesitated, stopped, and, turning to M. Roederer, said, "What is to become of our friends who remain behind?" M. Roederer pacified the king by assuring him, though falsely, that by throwing aside their arms and their uniform they would be able to escape in safety.

They then entered the Garden and crossed it, unopposed, between the two files of bayonets. The leaves of autumn strewed the paths, and the young dauphin amused himself in kicking them as he walked along. It is characteristic of the mental infirmities of the king that in such an hour he should have remarked, "There are a great many leaves. They fall early this year."

When they arrived at the door at the foot of the staircase which led to the hall of the Assembly, they found an immense crowd of men and women there blocking up the entrance. "They shall not enter here," was the cry; "they shall no longer deceive the nation. They are the cause of all our misfortunes. Down with the veto! Down with the Austrian woman! Abdication or death!"

"Sire," said one, in compassionate tones to the king, "Don't be afraid. The people are just. Be a good citizen, sire, and send the priests and your wife away from the palace."

The soldiers endeavored to force their way through the crowd, and, in the struggle, the members of the royal family were separated from each other. A stout grenadier seized the dauphin and raised him upon his shoulders. The queen, terrified lest her child was to be taken from her, uttered a piercing shriek. But the grenadiers pressed forward through the crowd, and, entering the hall with the king and queen, placed the prince royal on the table of the Assembly.

The illustrious Girondist M. Vergniaud was in the chair. The king approached him and said,

"I have come hither to prevent a great crime. I thought I could not be safer than with you."

"You may rely, sire," Vergniaud replied, "on the firmness of the Assembly. Its members have sworn to die in supporting the rights of the people and the constituted authority."

The king took his seat. There were but few members present. A mournful silence pervaded the hall as the deputies, with saddened countenances and sympathetic hearts, gazed upon the king, the queen, Madame Elizabeth, the beautiful young princess, and the dauphin, whom the queen held by the hand. All angry feelings died in presence of the melancholy spectacle, for all felt that a storm was now beating against the throne which no human power could allay.

FOOTNOTES:

340. La Fayette's Memoirs.

"M. de La Fayette seemed not to have been quite discouraged by the ill-success of his former embassy; for on the 10th of July M. de Lally came to me with a long letter written by M. La Fayette from his army, in which he drew a plan, ready as he said, for execution, to open the way for the king through his enemies, and to establish him in safety either in Compiègne or in the north part of France, surrounded by his constitutional guards and his faithful army,"—*Bertrand de Moleville.*

341. "That there should be no more sympathy," says Professor Smyth, "expressed by the king or the Royalists ever after, with the elevated nature of the principles of La Fayette or the steadiness of his loyalty, whenever he saw, as he thought, the king in danger, is quite intolerable; and there are no occasions on which the royal party appear to so little advantage as when it is desirable that they should show some little candor, some common justice to La Fayette."—*Lectures on French Revolution*, vol. ii., p. 298.

342. History of the Girondists, Lamartine, vol. ii., p. 36.

343. "Russia and England secretly approved the attacks of the European league, without as yet co-operating with it."—*Mignet*, p. 142. The British *government* were at this time restrained from active measures by the British *people*, the great mass of whom sympathized with the French in their struggle for liberty.

344. "The chiefs," says Bertrand do Moleville, "of the Gironde faction, who had planned the insurrection, did not, at that time, intend to overset the monarchy. Their design was to dethrone the king, make the crown pass to his son, and establish a council of regency."

345. Lamartine's History of the Girondists, vol. 2, p. 40. Barbaroux, one of the most active of the leaders in this movement, "a man of genius, fine affections, and noble sentiments," in his memoirs writes, "It was our wish that this insurrection in the cause of liberty should be majestic as is Liberty herself; holy as are the rights which she alone can ensure, and worthy to serve as an example to every people, who, to break the chains of their tyrants, have only to show themselves."

346. "The greatest sensation was produced in our own country of Great Britain, and all over Europe, by a manifesto like this, which went in truth to say, that two military powers were to march into a neighboring and independent kingdom to settle the civil dissensions there as they thought best, and to punish by military law, as rebels and traitors, all who presumed to resist them. No friend to freedom or the general rights of mankind could, for a moment, tolerate such a procedure as this. Even the success of the Jacobins and Anarchists was thought preferable to the triumph of invaders like these."—*Prof. Smyth's Lectures on the Fr. Rev.*, vol. ii., p. 326.

347. The Garden of the Tuileries includes an area of about sixty-seven acres. A whole army could encamp there.

348. One of the officers of the staff said to Madame Campan, in the midst of this scene of terror and confusion, "Put your jewels and money into your pockets. Our dangers are unavoidable.

The means of defense are unavailing. Safety might be obtained from some degree of energy in the king; but that is the only virtue in which he is deficient."—*Madame Campan*, vol. ii., p. 240.

349. Roederer, Chronique de Cinquante Jours.

350. "List! through the placid midnight; clang of the distant storm-bell. Steeple after steeple takes up the wondrous tale. Black courtiers listen at the windows opened for air; discriminate the steeple-bells. This is the tocsin of St. Roch; that, again, is *it* not St. Jaques, named *de la Boucherie*? Yes, messieurs! or even St. Germain l'Auxerrois, hear ye it not? The same metal that rang storm two hundred and twenty years ago; but by a majesty's order then; on St. Bartholomew's Eve!"—*Carlyle*, vol. ii., p. 138.

351. "The behavior of Marie Antoinette was magnanimous in the highest degree. Her majestic air, her Austrian lip and aquiline nose, gave her an air of dignity which can only be conceived by those who beheld her in that trying hour."—*Peltier.*

352. Where the iron railing now stands which separates the spacious court of the Tuileries from the Carrousel, so called because Louis XIV., in 1662, held a great tournament here, there were, in 1792, rows of small houses and sheds. The court was then divided by railings into three divisions. The central one, which was rather larger than the others, was called the Cour Royale. The king's troops were stationed in these courts, while the insurgents were filling the Carrousel. These court-yards, now thrown into one, afforded Napoleon ample space for the review of his troops.

353. M. Roederer, a constitutional monarchist, was one of the most illustrious men of the Revolution. Denounced by the Jacobins he was compelled, like La Fayette, to seek refuge in flight. Upon Napoleon's return from Egypt he aided effectually in rescuing France from anarchy, and in establishing the Consulate and the Empire. He co-operated cordially with the Emperor in his plans of reform, was the chief instrument in concluding a treaty between France and the United States, and took a large share in the regeneration of the Kingdom of Naples by Joseph Bonaparte. When Napoleon fell beneath the blows of allied Europe, Roederer, in sadness, withdrew to retirement.—*Enc. Am.*

354. Madame Campan, vol. ii., p. 274, note.

Chapter XXVIII.
The Royal Family Imprisoned

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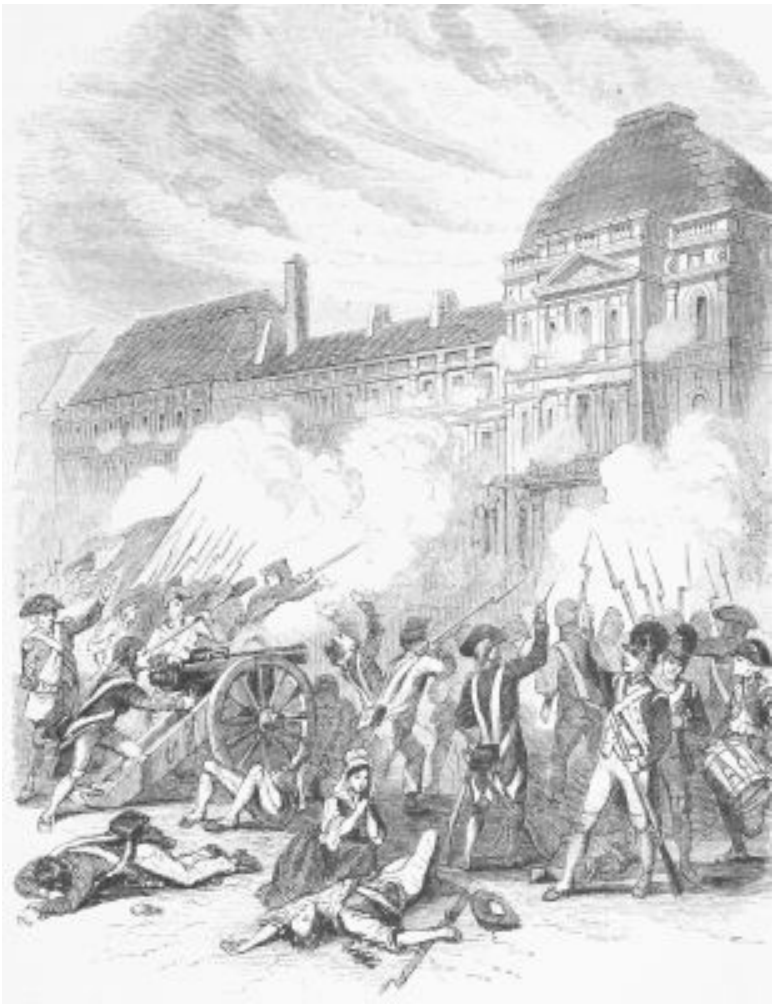
But few of the excited thousands who crowded all the approaches to the Tuileries were conscious that the royal family had escaped from the palace. The clamor rapidly increased to a scene of terrific uproar. First a few gun-shots were heard, then volleys of musketry, then the deep booming of artillery, while shouts of onset, cries of fury, and the shrieks of the wounded and the dying filled the air. The hall of the Assembly was already crowded to suffocation, and the deputies stood powerless and appalled. A tumultuous mass pressed the door. Blows, pistol-shots, and groans of death were heard beneath the windows, and it was every moment apprehended that the assassins would break into the hall, and that the royal family and all their defenders would be cut down. Several bullets shattered the windows, and one or two cannon-balls passed through the roof of the building. Every one was exposed to fearful peril

There was no longer any retreat for the king. By the side of the president's chair there was a space inclosed by an iron railing, appropriated to the reporters. Several of the members aided the king in tearing down a portion of this railing, and all the royal family sought refuge there. At this moment the door of the hall was attacked, and tremendous blows seemed to shake the whole building. "We are stormed!" shouted one of the deputies. There was, however, no escape for any one in any direction, and for some moments there was witnessed a scene of confusion and terror which no language can describe.

At the same time there was a frightful conflict raging in and around the palace. Immediately upon the departure of the king, all the Swiss troops,

who were hated as foreign mercenaries hired to shoot down the French, were drawn into the palace from the court-yard, and were mingled in confusion through its apartments with the loyalist gentlemen, the officers, and the domestics. Notwithstanding the vast dimensions of the palace, it was so crowded that there was scarcely space to move.



STORMING THE TUILERIES, AUGUST 10, 1792.

The throng in the Carrousel attacked one of the gates, broke it down, and rushed into the royal court, which was nearly vacated by the retirement of the Swiss. The companies of the National Guard in the Carrousel, instead of opposing, looked approvingly on, and were evidently quite disposed to lend the assailants a helping hand. A large piece of timber was placed at the foot of the staircase of the palace in the form of a

barrier, and behind this were intrenched in disorder, crowding the steps, the Swiss and some of the National Guard who adhered to the king.[355]

Just then the whole Faubourg St. Antoine came marching along in solid column. They marched through the Carrousel, entered the court, and placed six pieces of cannon in battery to open a fire upon the palace. It was to avoid, if possible, a conflict, that the guards had been withdrawn from the court into the palace. The shouts of a countless multitude applauded this military movement of the mob. The Swiss had received command from the king not to fire. The crowd cautiously pressed nearer and nearer to the door, and at length, emboldened by the forbearance of the defenders of the palace, seized, with long poles to which hooks were attached, one after another of the sentinels, and, with shouts, captured and disarmed them. Thus five of the Swiss troops were taken prisoners.

MASSACRE OF THE ROYAL GUARD, AUGUST 10, 1792.

At last a single shot was fired, no one can tell on which side. It was the signal for blood. The Swiss, crowded upon the magnificent marble stairs, rising one above another, occupied a very formidable position. They instantly opened a deadly fire. Volley succeeded volley, and every bullet told upon the dense mass crowding the court. At the same moment, from every window of the palace, a storm of shot was showered down upon the foe. In a moment the pavement was red with blood, and covered with the dying and the dead. The artillerymen abandoned their pieces, and the whole multitude rushed pell-mell, trampling the dead and wounded beneath them in frantic endeavors to escape from the court into the Carrousel. In a few moments the whole court was evacuated, and remained strewed with pikes, muskets, grenadiers' caps, and gory bodies.

The besiegers, however, soon rallied. Following the disciplined troops from Marseilles, who were led by able officers, the multitude returned with indescribable fury to the charge. Cannon-balls, bullets, and grapeshot dashed in the doors and the windows. Most of the loyalist gentlemen escaped by a secret passage through the long gallery of the Louvre, as the victorious rabble, with pike, bayonet, and sabre, poured resistlessly into the palace and rushed through all its apartments. The Swiss threw down their arms and begged for quarter. But the pitiless mob, exasperated by the slaughter of their friends, knew no mercy. Indiscriminate massacre ensued, accompanied with every conceivable act of brutality. For four hours the butchery continued, as attics, closets, cellars, chimneys, and vaults were searched, and the terrified victims were dragged out to die. Some leaped from the windows and endeavored to escape through the Garden. They were pursued and mercilessly cut down. Some climbed the marble monuments. The assassins, unwilling to injure the statuary, pricked them down with their bayonets and then slaughtered them at their feet. Seven hundred and fifty Swiss were massacred in that day of blood.

The Assembly during these hours were powerless, and they awaited in intense anxiety the issue of the combat. Nothing can more impressively show the weak and frivolous mind of the king than that, in such an hour, seeing the painter David in the hall, he inquired of him,

"How soon shall you probably have my portrait completed?"

David brutally replied, "I will never, for the future, paint the portrait of a tyrant until his head lies before me on the scaffold."[356]

The queen sat in haughty silence. Her compressed lip, burning eye, and hectic cheek indicated the emotions of humiliation and of indignation with which she was consumed. The young princess wept, and her fevered face was stained with the dried current of her tears. The dauphin, too young to appreciate the terrible significance of the scene, looked around in bewildered curiosity.

At eleven o'clock reiterated shouts of victory, which rose from the Garden, the palace, the Carrousel, and all the adjoining streets and places, proclaimed that the triumph of the people was complete. The Assembly, now overawed, unanimously passed a decree suspending the king, dismissing the Royalist ministers, recalling the Girondist ministry, and convoking a National Assembly for the trial of the king. As Vergniaud read, in accents of grief, this decree to which the Assembly had been forced, the king listened intently, and then said satirically to M. Coustard, who was standing by his side,

"This is not a very *constitutional* act."

"True," M. Coustard replied; "but it is the only means of saving your majesty's life."

The Assembly immediately enacted the decrees, which the king had vetoed, banishing the refractory priests and establishing a camp near Paris. Danton,[357] whose tremendous energies had guided the insurrection, was appointed Minister of Justice. Monge, the illustrious mathematician, by the nomination of his equally illustrious friend Condorcet, was placed at the head of the Marine. Lebrun, a man of probity and untiring energy, was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Thus was the whole government effectually revolutionized and reorganized. During all the long hours of this day the royal family sat in the crowded Assembly almost suffocated with heat, and enduring anguish which no tongue can tell. The streets were filled with uproar, and the waves of popular tumult dashed against the old monastery of the Feuillans, even threatening to break in the doors. The regal victims listened to the decrees which tore the crown from the brow of the king, and which placed his sceptre in the hands of his most envenomed foes. In the conflict with

the defenders of the palace, between three and four thousand of the populace had perished, in revenge for which nearly eight hundred of the inmates of the Tuileries had been massacred. The relatives of the slain citizens, exasperated beyond measure, were clamorous for the blood of the king as the cause of the death of their friends. There was no possible covert for the royal family but in the Assembly. Fifty armed soldiers, with bayonets fixed, surrounded them in their box, and yet it was every moment feared that the populace would break in and satiate their rage with the blood of the monarch and his family.

The king was ever famed for his ravenous appetite. Even in the midst of these terrific scenes he was hungry and called for food. Bread, wine, and cold viands were brought to him. He ate and drank voraciously to the extreme mortification of the queen, who could not but perceive how little respect the conduct of the king inspired. Neither she, Madame Elizabeth, nor the children could taste of any food. They merely occasionally moistened their fevered lips with iced water.

It was now ten o'clock in the evening. The night was calm and beautiful. The tumult of the day was over, but the terrific excitement of the scene had brought the whole population of Paris out into the promenades. Fires were still blazing beneath the trees of the Tuileries, consuming the furniture which had been thrown from the windows of the chateau. Lurid flames flashed from the barracks of the Swiss in the court-yard, which had been set on fire, streaming over the roof of the palace, and illuminated both banks of the Seine.

The whole number slain during the day, Royalists and Revolutionists, amounted to over four thousand. Many of the dead had been removed by relatives, but the ground was still covered with the bodies of the slain, who were entirely naked, having been stripped of their clothing by those wretches who ever swarm in the streets of a great city, and who find their carnival in deeds of violence and blood. By order of the insurrectional committee at the Hôtel de Ville, who had deposed the municipal government and usurped its authority, these dead bodies were collected and piled in vast heaps in the court-yards, in the Garden, in the Place Louis XV., and in the Elysian Fields. Immense quantities of wood were thrown upon them, and the whole city was illuminated by the glare of these funeral fires. The Swiss and the Marsellais, the Royalists and the Jacobins,

were consumed together, and the ashes were swept clean from the pavement into the Seine.

As these scenes at midnight were transpiring in the streets, the Assembly sent a summary of its decrees to be read by torch-light to the groups of the people. It was hoped that these decrees would satisfy them, and put a stop to any farther acts of violence on the morrow. It was two o'clock in the morning before the Assembly suspended its sitting. For seventeen hours the royal family had sat in the reporters' box, enduring all of humiliation and agony which human hearts can feel.

In the upper part of the old monastery, above the committee-rooms of the Assembly, there was a spacious corridor, from which opened several cells formerly used by the monks. These cells, with walls of stone and floors of brick, and entirely destitute of furniture, were as gloomy as the dungeons of a prison. Here only could the king and his family find safety for the night. Some articles of furniture were hastily collected from different parts of the building, and four of these rooms were prepared for the royal party. Five nobles, who had heroically adhered to the king in these hours of peril, occupied one, where, wrapped in their cloaks and stretched out upon the floor, they could still watch through the night over the monarch. The king took the next. It was furnished with a table, and a plain wooden bedstead. He bound a napkin around his head for a night-cap, and threw himself, but partially undressed, upon his uncurtained bed. The queen, with her two children, took the next cell. Madame Elizabeth, with the governess of the children, Madame de Tourzel, and the Princess Lamballe, who had joined the royal family in the evening, took the fourth. Thus, after thirty-six hours of sleeplessness and terror, the royal family were left to such repose as their agitated minds could attain.

The sun had long arisen when the queen awoke from her fevered slumber. She looked around her for a moment with an expression of anguish, and then, covering her eyes with her hands, exclaimed,

"Oh, I hoped that it had all been a dream!"

The whole party soon met in the apartment of the king. As Madame Tourzel led in the two royal children, Marie Antoinette looked at them sadly, and said,

"Poor children! how heart-rending it is, instead of handing down to them so fine an inheritance, to say, it ends with us!"

"I still see, in imagination," writes Madame Campan, "and shall always see, that narrow cell of the Feuillans, hung with green paper; that wretched couch where the dethroned queen stretched out her arms to us, saying that our misfortunes, of which she was the cause, aggravated her own. There, for the last time, I saw the tears, I heard the sobs of her whom her high birth, the endowments of nature, and, above all, the goodness of her heart, had seemed to destine for the ornament of a throne and for the happiness of her people."

The tumult of the streets still penetrated their cells, and warned them that they had entered upon another day of peril. The excited populace were still hunting out the aristocrats, and killing them pitilessly wherever they could be found. At ten o'clock the royal family were conducted again to the Assembly, probably as the safest place they could occupy, and there they remained all day. Several of the Swiss had been taken prisoners on the previous day, and by humane people had been taken to the Assembly that their lives might be saved. The mob now clamored loudly at the door of the hall, and endeavored to break in, demanding the lives of the Swiss and of the escort of the king, calling them murderers of the people. Vergniaud, the president, was so shocked by their ferocity that he exclaimed, "Great God, what cannibals!"

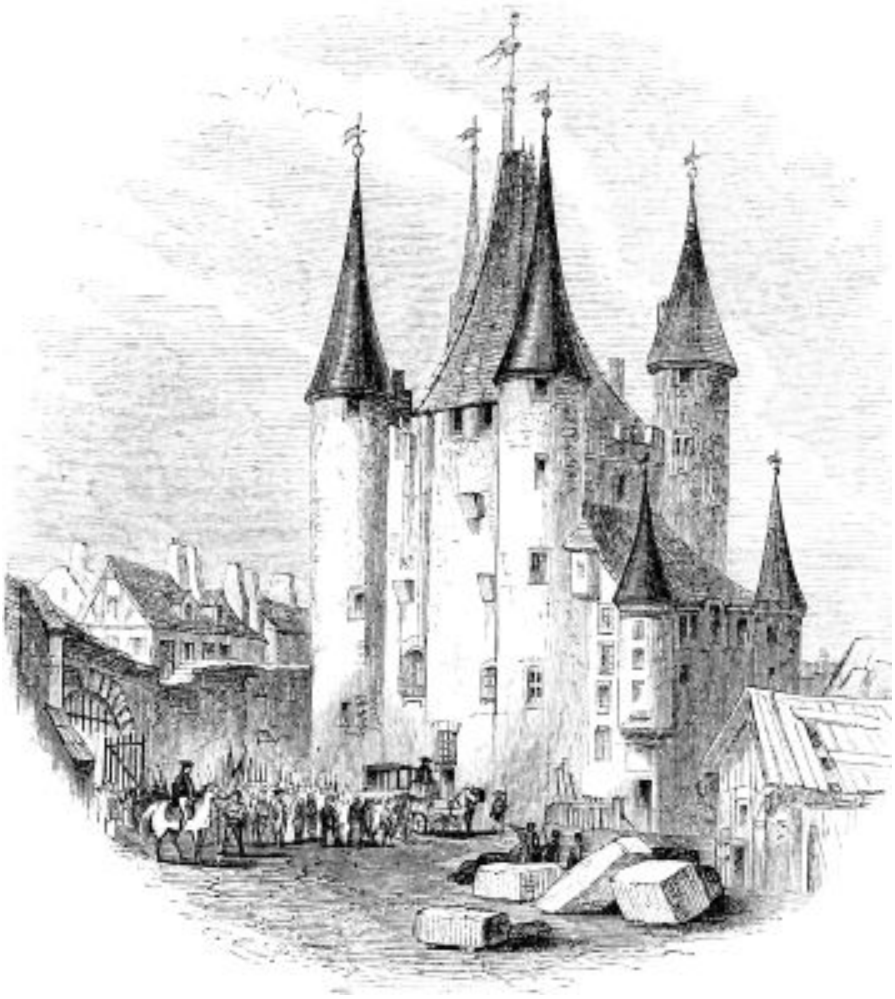
At one time the doors were so nearly forced that the royal family were hurried into one of the passages, to conceal them from the mob. The king, fully convinced that the hour of his death had now come, entreated his friends to provide for their safety by flight. Heroically, every one persisted in sharing the fate of the king. Danton hastened to the Assembly, and exerted all his rough and rude energy to appease the mob. They were at length pacified by the assurance that the Swiss, and all others who had abetted in the slaughter of the people on the preceding day, should be tried by a court-martial and punished. With great difficulty the Assembly succeeded in removing the Swiss and the escort of the king to the prison of the Abbaye.

At the close of this day the king and his family were again conducted to their cells, but they were placed under a strict guard, and their personal friends were no longer permitted to accompany them. This last deprivation was a severe blow to them all, and the king said bitterly,

"I am, then, a prisoner, gentlemen. Charles I. was more fortunate than myself. His friends were permitted to accompany him to the scaffold."

Another morning dawned upon this unhappy family, and again they were led to the hall of the Assembly, where they passed the weary hours of another day in the endurance of all the pangs of martyrdom.

It was at length decided that the royal family, for safe keeping, should be imprisoned in the tower of the Temple. This massive, sombre building, in whose gloomy architecture were united the palace, the cloister, the fortress, and the prison, was erected and inhabited by the Knights Templar of the Middle Ages. Having been long abandoned it was now crumbling to decay. It was an enormous pile which centuries had reared near the site of the Bastille, and with its palace, donjon, towers, and garden, which was choked with weeds and the débris of crumbling walls, covered a space of many acres.



The main tower was one hundred and fifty feet high, nine feet thick at the base, surrounded by a wide, deep ditch, and inclosed by an immensely high wall. This tower was ascended by a very narrow flight of circular stairs, and was divided into four stories, each containing a bare, dismal room about thirty feet square. The iron doors to these rooms were so low and narrow that it was necessary to stoop almost double to enter them. The windows, which were but slits in the thick wall, were darkened by slanting screens placed over them, and were also secured by stout iron bars.

Such were the apartments which were now assigned to the former occupants of the Tuileries, Versailles, and Fontainebleau. It was a weary ride for the royal captives through the Place Vendôme and along the Boulevards to the Temple. An immense crowd lined the road. All the royal family, with Pétion, the mayor, occupied one carriage, and the procession moved so slowly that for two hours the victims were exposed to the gaze of the populace before the carriages rolled under the arches of the Temple. It was late in the afternoon when they left the Assembly, and the shades of night darkened the streets ere they reached the Temple.

The Assembly had surrendered the safe-keeping of the king to the Commune of Paris, and appropriated one hundred thousand dollars to meet the expenses of the royal family until the king should be brought to trial. Conscious that an army of nearly two hundred thousand men was within a few days' march of Paris, hastening to rescue the king, and that there were thousands of Royalists in the city, and tens of thousands in France, who were ready at any moment to lay down their lives to secure the escape of the monarch, and conscious that the escape of the king would not only re-enslave France, but consign every friend of the Revolution to the dungeon or the scaffold, they found it necessary to adopt the most effectual measures to hold the king securely. They, therefore, would no longer allow the friends of the king to hold free communication with him.

The Temple itself, by outworks, had been promptly converted into a fortress, and was strongly garrisoned by the National Guard. Twelve commissioners were without interruption to keep watch of the king's person. No one was allowed to enter the tower of the Temple without permission of the municipality. Four hundred dollars were placed in the

hands of the royal family for their petty expenses. They were not intrusted with more, lest it might aid them to escape. A single attendant, the king's faithful valet Clery,[358] was permitted to accompany the captives. It does not appear that the authorities wished to add unnecessary rigor to the imprisonment. Thirteen cooks were provided for the kitchen, that their table might be abundantly supplied. One of these only was allowed to enter the prison and aid Clery in serving at the table, the expenses of which for two months amounted to nearly six thousand dollars.[359]

It was an hour after midnight when the royal family were led from the apartments of the Temple to which they had first been conducted to their prison in the tower. The night was intensely dark. Dragoons with drawn sabres marched by the side of the king, while municipal officers with lanterns guided their steps. Through gloomy and dilapidated halls, beneath massive turrets, and along the abandoned paths of the garden, encumbered with weeds and stones, they groped their way until they arrived at the portals of the tower, whose summit was lost in the obscurity of night. As in perfect silence the sad procession was passing through the garden, a valet-de-chambre of the king inquired in a low tone of voice whither the king was to be conducted.

"Thy master," was the reply, "has been used to gilded roofs. Now he will see how the assassins of the people are lodged."

The three lower rooms of the tower were assigned to the captives. They had been accompanied by several of their friends who adhered to them in these hours of adversity. All were oppressed with gloom, and many shed bitter tears. Still they were not in *despair*. Powerful armies were marching for their rescue, and they thought it not possible that the French people, all unprepared for war, could resist such formidable assailants. A week thus passed away, when on the 19th the municipal officers entered and ordered the immediate expulsion of all not of the royal family. This harsh measure was deemed necessary in consequence of the conspiracies which were formed by the Royalists for the rescue of the king. Unfeeling jailers were now placed over them, and, totally uninformed of all that was passing in the world without, they sank into the extreme of woe.

FOOTNOTES:

355. "Napoleon se trouvait au 10ième Août à Paris; il avait été présent à l'action. Il m'écrevit une lettre très détaillée, que je lus à mes collègues du directoire du département; voici les deux traits principaux. 'Si Louis XVI. se fût montré à cheval la victoire lui fût restée; c'est ce qui m'a paru, à l'esprit qui animait les groupes le matin.

"'Après la victoire des Marseillais, j'en vis un sur le point de tuer un garde du corps; je lui dis,

"'Homme du midi, sauvons ce malheureux!

"'Es tu du midi?

"'Oui!

"'Eh, bien! sauvons le!'"—*Mémoires du Roi Joseph*, t. i., p. 47.

356. History of the Girondists, by Lamartine, vol. ii., p. 77.

357. Danton was one of the fiercest of the Jacobins. Madame Roland, a political opponent, thus describes him: "I never saw any countenance that so strongly expressed the violence of brutal passions, and the most astonishing audacity, half disguised by a jovial air, an affectation of frankness, and a sort of simplicity, as Danton's. In 1778 he was a needy lawyer, more burdened with debts than causes. He went to Belgium to augment his resources, and, after the 10th of August, had the hardihood to avow a fortune of £158,333 ($791,665), and to wallow in luxury while preaching sans culottism and sleeping on heaps of slaughtered men." "Danton," says Mignet, "was a gigantic revolutionist. He deemed no means censurable so they were useful. He has been termed the Mirabeau of the populace. Mirabeau's vices were those of a patrician. Danton's those of a democrat. He was an absolute exterminator without being personally ferocious; inexorable toward masses, humane, generous even, toward individuals."—*Mignet*, p. 158.

358. "Clery we have seen and known, and the form and manners of that model of pristine faith and loyalty ran never be forgotten. Gentlemanlike and complaisant in his manners, his deep gravity and melancholy features announced that the sad scenes in which he had acted a part so honorable were never for a moment out of his memory."—*Scott's Life of Napoleon*.

359. Thiers's Hist. French Revolution, vol. ii., p. 26.

Chapter XXIX.
The Massacre of the Royalists

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The majestic armies of the Allies were now rapidly on the march toward France, and there was no force on the frontiers which could present any effectual resistance. La Fayette was at Sedan, about one hundred and fifty miles northwest of Paris, at the head of twenty thousand troops who were devoted to him. His opposition to the Jacobins had already caused him to be denounced as a traitor, and it was feared that he might go over to the enemy, and by his strong influence carry not only his own troops, but those of General Luckner with him. The condition of the Patriots was apparently desperate. The Allies were confident of a triumphant and a rapid march to Paris, where all who had sacrilegiously laid hands upon the old despotism of France would be visited with condign punishment

The Jacobin Club was now the sovereign power in France. It was more numerous than the Legislative Assembly, and its speakers, more able and impassioned, had perfect control of the populace. The Jacobins had, by the insurrection, or rather revolution of the 10th of August, organized a new municipal government. Whatever measure the Jacobin Club decided to have enforced it sent to the committee which the club had organized as the city government at the Hôtel de Ville. This committee immediately demanded the passage of the decree by the Legislative Assembly. If the Assembly manifested any reluctance in obeying, they were informed that the tocsin would be rung, the populace summoned, and the scenes of the

10th of August renewed, to make them willing. Such was now the new government instituted in France.

The *Commune of Paris*, as this municipal body at the Hôtel de Ville was called, immediately entered upon the most vigorous measures to break up the conspiracy of the Royalists, that they might not be able to rise and join the invading armies of the Allies. The French Patriots had two foes equally formidable to dread—the emigrants with the Allies marching upon the frontiers, composing an army nearly two hundred thousand strong, and the Royalists in France, who were ready, as soon as the Allies entered the kingdom, to raise the standard of civil war, and to fall upon the Patriots with exterminating hand. There was thus left for the leaders of the Revolution only the choice between killing and being killed. It was clear that they must now either exterminate their foes or be exterminated by them. And it must on all hands be admitted that the king and the court, by refusing to accept constitutional liberty, had brought the nation to this direful alternative.

To prevent suspected persons from escaping, no one was allowed to leave the gates of Paris without the most careful scrutiny of his passport. A list was made out of every individual known to be unfriendly to the Revolution, and all such were placed under the most vigilant surveillance. The citizens were enjoined to denounce all who had taken any part in the slaughter of the citizens on the 10th of August. All writers who had supported the Royalist cause were ordered to be arrested, and their presses were given to Patriotic writers. Commissioners were sent to the prisons to release all who had been confined for offenses against the court. As it was feared that the army, influenced by La Fayette, might manifest hostility to the revolutionary movement in Paris, which had so effectually demolished the Constitution, commissioners were sent to enlighten the soldiers and bring them over to the support of the people. It was at first contemplated to assign the palace of the Luxembourg as the retreat of the royal family. The Commune of Paris, however, decided that the public safety required that they should be held in custody where escape would be impossible, and that their safe-keeping should be committed to the mayor, Pétion, and to Santerre, who had been appointed commander of the National Guards.

The Assembly, alarmed at the encroachments of the self-constituted *Commune of Paris*, ordered a re-election of a municipal government to

take the place of that which the insurrection had dissolved. The Commune instantly dispatched a committee to inform the Assembly that if they made any farther move in that direction the tocsin should again be rung, and that the populace, who had stormed the Tuileries, should be directed against their hall. The deputies, overawed by the threat, left the Commune in undisputed possession of its power. The Commune now demanded of the Assembly the appointment of a special tribunal to punish the Royalists who had fired upon the people from the Tuileries, and those who "as conspirators and traitors" were ready to join the Allies as soon as they should enter France. The Assembly hesitated. The Commune sent Robespierre at the head of a deputation to inform them in those emphatic terms which he ever had at his command, that the country was in danger, that the Allies and emigrants were on the march, that no delay could be tolerated, and that if the decree were not immediately passed *the tocsin should be rung*. The appalling threat was efficient, and the decree, though some heroically opposed, was passed.[360] Such was the origin of the first revolutionary tribunal.

LA FAYETTE IN PRISON AT OLMUTZ.

As soon as the commissioners from Paris arrived at the camp of La Fayette they were by his orders arrested and imprisoned, and the soldiers took anew the oath of fidelity to the *law* and the *king*. The news of their arrest reached Paris on the 17th, and excited intense irritation. La Fayette was denounced more vehemently than ever, and a fresh deputation was dispatched to the army. La Fayette was now ruined. The court was ready to hang him for his devotion to liberty. The Jacobins thirsted for his blood because he thwarted their plans. Every hour his situation became more desperate, and it was soon evident that he could do no more for his country, and that there was no refuge for him but in flight. On the 20th, accompanied by a few friends, he secretly left his army, and took the road to the Netherlands. When he reached the Austrian outposts at Rochefort, he was arrested as a criminal in defiance of all law. With great secrecy he was taken into the interior of Austria, and thrown into a dungeon in the impregnable fortress of Olmutz. His only crime was that he had wished to introduce *constitutional liberty* to his country. This, in the eye of despots, was an unpardonable sin. Here we must leave him to languish five years in captivity, deprived of every comfort. Many efforts were made in vain for his release. Washington wrote directly to the Emperor of Austria in his behalf, but without effect. It was not till Napoleon, thundering at the walls of Vienna with his invincible legions, demanded the release of La Fayette, in 1797, that the doors of his dungeon were thrown open.[361]

The British *people* sympathized deeply with La Fayette, but the British *government* assailed him with unrelenting ferocity. On the 17th of March, 1794, General Fitzpatrick moved an address in the House of Commons, to his majesty, requesting his interference with the King of Prussia in behalf of La Fayette. Mr. Fox advocated the measure in a speech of great eloquence and power. Nothing can more clearly show the spirit of the court party in England at this time than the speeches made by them on this occasion. William Pitt assailed La Fayette in the most unfeeling manner, declaring that "he would never admit that La Fayette was a true friend of liberty or deserved well of his country or of Europe." "He said," writes Prof. Smyth, "every thing that it is painful to read—he was rendered insensible on this occasion to all the better notions of his education and natural intuitions of his understanding. There is no pleasure in reading the

abstract of his speech. It might have been made by the most vulgar minister that ever appeared." Edmund Burke followed in a speech of unmeasured abuse. In glowing colors he depicted all the scenes of violence which had occurred in France, and, declaring La Fayette responsible for them all, concluded with the words, "I would not debauch my humanity by supporting an application like the present in behalf of such a horrid ruffian."[362] Mr. Windham followed in the same strain. He expressed exultation in view of the calamities which had fallen upon this great patriot. "La Fayette," said he, "has brought himself into that state into which all fomenters of great and ruinous revolutions must necessarily fall; he has betrayed and ruined his country and his king. I am not sorry. I rejoice to see such men drink deep of the cup of calamity which they have prepared for the lips of others; and I never will consent to do an act which will put a premium on revolution, and which will give the example of sanction to treason, and of reward to rebellion."

Such was the spirit of the court of St. James at this time. These speeches were made after La Fayette had been languishing for two years in the dungeons of Olmutz, exposed to almost every conceivable indignity, the particulars of which Mr. Fox had affectingly narrated. The debate was concluded by Mr. Dundas, who thanked Mr. Windham for his admirable speech. When the vote was taken but fifty were found in sympathy with La Fayette, while one hundred and thirty-two voted against him.

The two sovereigns of Prussia and Austria were now at Mayence. Sixty thousand Prussians were marching in single column by Luxembourg upon Longwy, flanked on the right by twenty thousand Austrians, and on the left by twenty-six thousand Austrians and Hessians. This majestic force was strengthened by several co-operating corps of French emigrants, destined to attack exposed positions, and to afford rallying points for treason. The invaders crossed the frontiers unimpeded, and after a short and bloody strife captured Longwy. Onward they rushed. The feeble, undisciplined patriots, could make no resistance, and fled rapidly before them. Thionville and Verdun were surrounded, and after a short but terrific storm of balls and shells capitulated. There were many Royalists in each of these towns, and they received the invaders with every demonstration of joy.

Their daughters in congratulatory procession met the King of Prussia at the gates and strewed his path with flowers.

The garrison of Verdun might have held out for several days, though they would have eventually been compelled to surrender. General Beaurepaire urged very strenuously that they should maintain the siege to the last possible moment. But the defensive council of the city, with whom rested the decision, voted an immediate capitulation.

"Gentlemen," said Beaurepaire, "I have sworn never to surrender but with my life. You may live in disgrace, since you wish it; but as for me, faithful to my oath, behold my last words: *I die free*."

Immediately he discharged a pistol-shot through his brain, and fell dead before them. The Convention decreed to him the honors of the Pantheon, and granted a pension to his widow.

SUICIDE OF BEAUREPAIRE.

The victorious allies, having surmounted these first obstacles, now plunged into the defiles of the Argonne, and in fierce and bloody assaults drove before them the troops of Dumouriez, who had hoped in these

forest-encumbered passes to present effectual resistance to the foe. The invaders were now triumphantly marching on the high-road to Paris, and fugitives were continually arriving in the metropolis, declaring that the army of the north was destroyed, and that there was no longer any obstacle to the advance of the enemy. No language can describe the consternation which pervaded the capital. The exultation in the enemy's camp was immense. The "cobblers and tailors," as the emigrants contemptuously called the Patriots, were running away, it was said, like sheep.[363]

As each day brought tidings of the fearful strides which the Allies were making toward the capital, indescribable terror was enkindled. The Constitutionalists and the Girondists were utterly paralyzed. But the leaders of the Jacobins—Danton, Robespierre, and Marat—resolved that, if they were to perish, their Royalist enemies should perish with them. It was known that the Royalists intended, as soon as the Allies should be in Paris, to rise, liberate the king, and with the immense moral force they would attain by having the king at their head, join the invaders. Nothing would then remain for the Revolutionists but exile, death, and the dungeon.[364]

It was now with them but a desperate struggle for life. They must either destroy or be destroyed. The first great peril to be apprehended was the rising of the Royalists in Paris. The barriers were immediately ordered to be closed, and guard-boats were stationed on the river that no one might escape. At the beat of the drum every individual was enjoined to repair to his home. Commissioners then, accompanied by an armed force, visited every dwelling. Party lines were so distinctly drawn that the Royalists could not easily escape detection. At the knock of the commissioners they held their breath with terror. Many attempted concealment in chimneys, in cellar-vaults, beneath the floors, and in recesses covered by pictures of tapestry. But workmen, accustomed to all such arts, accompanied the commissioners. Chimneys were smoked, doors burst open, and cellars, floors, and walls sounded. In one short night five thousand suspected persons were torn from their homes and dragged to prison. Every man was deemed guilty who could not prove his devotion to the popular cause.[365]

Still the enemy was approaching. "In three days," rumor said, "the Prussians will be in Paris." The whole city was in a state of phrensy, and

ready for any deed of desperation which could rescue them from their peril. Danton entered the Assembly and ascended the tribune with pallid face and compressed lips. Silence, as of the grave, awaited his utterance.

"The enemy," said he, "threatens the kingdom, and the Assembly must prove itself worthy of the nation. It is by a convulsion that we have overthrown despotism; it is only by another vast national convulsion that we shall drive back the despots. It is time to urge the people to precipitate themselves *en masse* against their enemies. The French nation wills to be free, and it shall be."

There was lurking beneath these words a terrible significance then little dreamed of. Jacobins and Girondists were now united by the pressure of a common and a terrible danger. A decree was immediately passed for every citizen in Paris capable of bearing arms to repair to the Field of Mars, there to be enrolled to march to repel the Allies. It was the morning of the Sabbath. The *générale* was beat, the tocsin rung, alarm-guns fired, and placards upon the walls, and the voice of public criers, summoned every able-bodied man to the appointed rendezvous. The philosophic Vergniaud, in a word, explained to Paris the necessity and the efficacy of the measure.[366]

"The plan of the enemy," said he, "is to march directly to the capital, leaving the fortresses behind him. Let him do so. This course will be our salvation and his ruin. Our armies, too weak to withstand him, will be strong enough to harass him in the rear. When he arrives, pursued by our battalions, he will find himself face to face with our Parisian army drawn up in battle array under the walls of the capital. There, surrounded on all sides, he will be swallowed up by the soil which he has profaned."

In the midst of the uproar of the multitudes surging through the streets, as the bells were ringing, drums beating, and the armed citizens hurrying to the Field of Mars, the rumor was widely circulated that the Royalists had formed a conspiracy to strike down their jailers, break from their prisons, liberate the king, take possession of the city, rally all their confederates around them, and thus throw open the gates of Paris to the Prussians. It was manifest to all that, in the confusion which then reigned, and when the thunders of the Prussian and Austrian batteries were hourly expected to be heard from the heights of Montmartre, this was far from an

impracticable plan. It was certain that the Royalists would attempt it, whether they had already formed such a plan or not.

It is, however, probable that shrewd men, foreseeing this peril, had deliberately resolved to hurl the mob of Paris upon the prisons for the assassination of all the Royalists, before emptying the city of its defenders to march to meet the foe. While the bewildered masses were in this state of terrific excitement, six hackney-coaches left the Hôtel de Ville, conducting twenty-four Royalist priests, who had refused to take the oath, to the prisons of the Abbaye. The people crowding around and following the carriages began to murmur. "Here are the traitors," said they, "who intend to murder our wives and children while we are on the frontiers."

The first carriage reached the door of the prison. One priest alighted. He was instantly seized, and fell pierced by a thousand poniards. It was the signal for the slaughter of the whole. The murderers fell upon every carriage, and in a few moments all but one, who miraculously escaped, were slain. This hideous massacre roused the populace as the tiger is roused when he has once lapped his tongue in blood. The cry was raised, "To the Carmelites, to the Carmelites." In this prison two hundred priests were confined. The mob broke in and butchered them all.

BUTCHERY AT THE CARMELITES.

A man by the name of Maillard headed this mob, which consisted of but a few hundred men. Having finished the work at the Carmelites and

gorged themselves with wine, Maillard exclaimed, "Now to the Abbaye." The blood-stained crew rushed after him through the streets, and dashed in the doors of the prison. The Abbaye was filled with debtors and ordinary convicts as well as suspected aristocrats. As the mob rushed into the corridor one of the jailers mounted a stool, and, addressing the assassins, said, "My friends, you wish to destroy the aristocrats, who are the enemies of the people, and who meant to murder your wives and children while you were at the frontiers. You are right no doubt; but you are good citizens; you love justice; and you would be very sorry to steep your hands in innocent blood."

"Yes, certainly," one of the leaders replied.

"Well, then," continued the jailer, "when you are rushing like furious tigers upon men who are strangers to you, are you not liable to confound the innocent with the guilty?"

These thoughts seemed to impress them, and it was immediately decided that Maillard should judge each prisoner. He took his seat at a table; the prison list was placed in his hands, and the prisoners, one by one, were brought before his prompt and terrible tribunal. It was agreed, in order to spare unnecessary suffering, that when the judge should say, "Sir, you must go to the prison of La Force," as soon as the prisoner was led out into the court-yard he should be cut down.

A Swiss officer was first brought forward. "It was you," said Maillard, "who murdered the people on the 10th of August."

"We were attacked," the unfortunate man replied, "and only obeyed our superior officers."

"Very well," said Maillard, "we must send you to the prison of La Force."

He was led into the court-yard and instantly slain. Every Swiss soldier in the prison met the same fate. Thus the work went on with terrible expedition until one hundred and eighty were put to death. All the women were left unharmed. Many who were brought before the tribunal were acquitted, and the crowd manifested great joy in rescuing them as their friends. Amid these horrid scenes there were some gleams of humanity. The Governor of the Invalides was doomed to death. His daughter clasped her father in her arms and clung to him so despairingly that the hearts of the assassins were melted. One, in a strange freak, presented her with a

cup of blood, saying, "If you would save your father drink this blood of an aristocrat." She seized the cup and drained it. Shouts of applause greeted the act, and her father was saved.[367]

All the night long these horrid scenes were continued. Every prison in Paris witnessed the same massacres, accompanied with every conceivable variety of horrors.

The unfortunate Princess Lamballe, bosom friend of Marie Antoinette, was confined in the prison of La Force. She was brought before the revolutionary judge, and after a brief interrogation she was ordered to "swear to love liberty and equality; to swear to hate the king, the queen, and royalty." "I will take the first oath," the princess replied; "the second I can not take; it is not in my heart." One of the judges, wishing to save her, whispered in her ear, "Swear every thing or you are lost." But the unhappy princess was now utterly bewildered with terror, and could neither see nor hear. Her youth and beauty touched the hearts even of many of these brutal men. They desired her rescue, and endeavored to lead her safely through the crowd. Cry out, said they, 'long live the nation,' and you will not be harmed. But as she beheld the pavement strewn with corpses of the slain, she could not utter a word. Her silence was taken for defiance. A sabre blow struck her down. The murderers fell upon her like famished wolves upon a lamb. Her body was cut into fragments, and a band of wretches, with her head and heart upon pikes, shouted "*Let us carry them to the foot of the throne*." They rushed through the streets to the Temple, and shouted for the king and queen to look out at the windows. A humane officer, to shield them from the awful sight, informed them of the horrors which were transpiring. The queen fainted. As the king and Madame Elizabeth bent over her, for hours they were appalled by the clamor of the rabble around the walls of the Temple.

At last the prisons were emptied, and the murderers themselves became weary of blood. It is impossible to ascertain the numbers who perished. The estimate varies from six to twelve thousand. The Commune of Paris, which was but the servant of the Jacobin Club, issued orders that no more blood should be shed. Assuming that the assassination was demanded by the public danger, and that the wretches who had perpetrated it had performed a patriotic though a painful duty, they rewarded them for

their work. Nothing can more clearly show the terrible excitation of the public mind, produced by a sense of impending danger, than that a circular should have been addressed to all the communes of France, giving an account of the massacre as a necessary and a praiseworthy deed. In this extraordinary memorial, signed by the Administrators of the Committee of Surveillance, the writers say,

> "Brethren and Friends,—A horrid plot, hatched by the court, to murder all the Patriots of the French empire, a plot in which a great number of members of the National Assembly are implicated, having, on the ninth of last month, reduced the Commune of Paris to the cruel necessity of employing the power of the people to save the nation, it has not neglected any thing to deserve well of the country.
>
> "Apprised that barbarous hordes are advancing against it, the Commune of Paris hastens to inform its brethren in all the departments that part of the ferocious conspirators confined in the prisons have been put to death by the people—acts of justice which appear to it indispensable for repressing by terror the legions of traitors encompassed by its walls, at the moment when the people were about to march against the enemy; and no doubt the nation, after the long series of treasons which have brought it to the brink of the abyss, will eagerly adopt this useful and necessary expedient; and all the French will say, like the Parisians, 'We are marching against the enemy, and we will not leave behind us brigands to murder our wives and children.'"

The instigators of these atrocious deeds defended the measure as one of absolute necessity. "We must all go," it was said, "to fight the Prussians, and we can not leave these foes behind us, to rise and take the city and assail us in the rear." "If they had been allowed to live," others said, "in a few days we should have been murdered. It was strictly an act of self-defense." Danton ever avowed his approval of the measure, and said, "I looked my crime steadfastly in the face and I did it." Marat is reproached as having contributed to the deed.[368] Robespierre appears to have given

his assent to the massacre with reluctance, but it is in evidence that he walked his chamber through the whole night in agony, unable to sleep.

At eleven o'clock at night of this 2d of September Robespierre and St. Just retired together from the Jacobin Club to the room of the latter. St. Just threw himself upon the bed for sleep. Robespierre exclaimed in astonishment,

"What, can you think of sleeping on such a night? Do you not hear the tocsin? Do you not know that this night will be the last to perhaps thousands of our fellow-creatures, who are men at the moment you fall asleep, and when you awake will be lifeless corpses?"

"I know it," replied St. Just, "and deplore it; and I wish that I could moderate the convulsions of society; but what am I?" then, turning in his bed, he fell asleep. In the morning, as he awoke, he saw Robespierre pacing the chamber with hasty steps, occasionally stopping to look out of the window, and listening to the noises in the streets. "What, have you not slept?" asked St. Just.

"Sleep!" cried Robespierre; "sleep while hundreds of assassins murdered thousands of victims, and their pure or impure blood runs like water down the streets! Oh no! I have not slept. I have watched like remorse or crime. I have had the weakness not to close my eyes, but *Danton, he has slept*."[369]

Paris was at this time in a state of such universal consternation, the government so disorganized, and the outbreak so sudden and so speedy in its execution, that the Legislative Assembly, which was not in sympathy with the mob, and which was already overawed, ventured upon no measures of resistance.[370]

But there can be no excuse offered in palliation of such crimes. Language is too feeble to express the horror with which they ever must be regarded by every generous soul. But while we consign to the deepest infamy the assassins of September, to equal infamy let those despots be consigned who, in the fierce endeavor to rivet the chains of slavery anew upon twenty-five millions of freemen, goaded a nation to such hideous madness. The allied despots of Europe roused the people to a phrensy of despair, and thus drove them to the deed. Let it never be forgotten that it was *despotism*, not *liberty*, which planted the tree which bore this fruit. If

the government of a country be such that there is no means of redress for the oppressed people but in the horrors of insurrection, that country must bide its doom, for, sooner or later, an outraged people will rise. While, therefore, we contemplate with horror the outrages committed by the insurgent people, with still greater horror must we contemplate the outrages perpetrated by proud oppressors during long ages, consigning the people to ignorance and degradation. They who *brutalize* a people should be the last to complain that, when these people rise in the terribleness of their might, they behave *like brutes*. There is no safety for any nation but in the education, piety, and liberty of its masses.[371]

The Duke of Brunswick, urging resistlessly on his solid columns, battering down fortresses, plunging through defiles, anticipated no check. But on the 20th of September, to his great surprise, he encountered a formidable army intrenched upon the heights of Valmy, near Chalons, apparently prepared for firm resistance. Here Dumouriez, with much military skill, had rallied his retreating troops. All France had been roused and was rushing eagerly to his support. Paris, no longer fearing a rise of the Royalists, was dispatching several thousand thoroughly-armed men from the gates every day to strengthen the camp at Valmy, which was hardly a hundred miles from Paris. Dumouriez, when first assailed, had less than forty thousand troops in his intrenchments, but the number rapidly increased to over seventy thousand.

These were nearly all inexperienced soldiers, but they were inspired with intense enthusiasm, all struggling for national independence, and many conscious that defeat would but conduct them to the scaffold. Macdonald,[372] who afterward so gloriously led the columns at Wagram, and Kellerman, who subsequently headed the decisive charge at Marengo, were aids of Dumouriez. Louis Philippe also, then the Duke of Chartres and eldest son of the Duke of Orleans, signalized himself on the patriot side at the stern strife of Valmy.

The Duke of Brunswick brought forward his batteries and commenced a terrific cannonade. Column after column was urged against the redoubts. But the young soldiers of France, shouting *Vive la Nation*, bravely repulsed every assault. The Prussians, to their inexpressible chagrin, found it impossible to advance a step. Here the storm of battle raged with almost

incessant fury for twenty days. The French were hurrying from all quarters to the field; the supplies of the invaders were cut off; dysentery broke out in their camp; autumnal rains drenched them; winter was approaching; and they were compelled, in discomfiture and humiliation, to turn upon their track and retire.

On the 15th of October the Allies abandoned their camp and commenced a retreat. They retired in good order, and recrossed the frontier, leaving behind them twenty-five thousand, who had perished by sickness, the bullet, and the sword. Dumouriez did not pursue them with much vigor, for the army of the Allies was infinitely superior in discipline to the raw troops under his command.

Winter was now at hand, during which no external attack upon France was to be feared. All government was disorganized, and the question which agitated every heart was, "What shall be done with the king?"

The Duke of Chartres, subsequently Louis Philippe, King of the French, then a young man but seventeen years of age, after vigorously co-operating with Dumouriez in repelling the invaders, returned to Paris. He presented himself at the audience of Servan, Minister of War, to complain of some injustice. Danton was present, and, taking the young duke aside, said to him,

"What do you do here? Servan is but the shadow of a minister. He can neither help nor harm you. Call on me to-morrow and I will arrange your business."

The next day Danton, the powerful plebeian, received the young patrician with an air of much affected superiority. "Well, young man," said he, "I am informed that your language resembles murmurs; that you blame the great measures of government; that you express compassion for the victims and hatred for the executioners. Beware; patriotism does not admit of lukewarmness, and you have to obtain pardon for your great name."

The young prince boldly replied, "The army looks with horror on bloodshed any where but on the battle-field. The massacres of September seem in their eyes to dishonor liberty."

"You are too young," Danton replied, "to judge of these events; to comprehend these you must be in our place. For the future be silent. Return to the army; fight bravely; but do not rashly expose your life. France does not love a republic; she has the habits, the weaknesses, the

need of a monarchy. After our storms she will return to it, either through her vices or necessities, and you will be king. Adieu, young man. Remember the prediction of Danton."[373]

In reference to these scenes Napoleon remarked at St. Helena, on the 3d of September, 1816, "To-day is the anniversary of a hideous remembrance; of the massacres of September, the St. Bartholomew of the French Revolution. The atrocities of the 3d of September were not committed under the sanction of government, which, on the contrary, used its endeavors to punish the crime. The massacres were committed by the mob of Paris, and were the result of fanaticism rather than of absolute brutality. The Septembriseurs did not pillage, they only wished to murder. They even hanged one of their own party for having appropriated a watch which belonged to one of their victims.

"This dreadful event arose out of the force of circumstances and the spirit of the moment. We must acknowledge that there has been no political change unattended by popular fury, as soon as the masses enter into action. The Prussian army had arrived within one hundred miles of Paris. The famous manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick was placarded on all the walls of the city. The people had persuaded themselves that the death of all the Royalists in Paris was indispensable to the safety of the Revolution. They ran to the prisons and intoxicated themselves with blood, shouting *Vive la Revolution*. Their energy had an electric effect, from the fear with which it inspired one party, and the example which it gave to the other. One hundred thousand volunteers joined the army, and the Revolution was saved.

"I might have preserved my crown by turning loose the masses of the people against the advocates of the restoration. You well recollect, Montholon, when, at the head of your *faubouriens*, you wished to punish the treachery of Fouché and proclaim my dictatorship. I did not choose to do so. My whole soul revolted at the thought of being king of another mob. As a general rule no social revolution can take place without terror. Every revolution is in principle a revolt, which time and success ennoble and render legal, but of which terror has been one of the inevitable phases. How, indeed, can we say to those who possess fortune and public situations, '*Begone and leave us your fortunes and your situations*,'

without first intimidating them, and rendering any defense impossible. In France this point was effected by the lantern and the guillotine."[374]

FOOTNOTES:

360. "As a citizen, as a magistrate of the people," said one of the deputation, "I come to inform you that at twelve o'clock this night the tocsin will be rung and the alarm beaten. The people are weary of not being avenged. Beware lest they do themselves justice. I demand that you forthwith decree that a citizen be appointed by each section to form a criminal tribunal."—*Thiers*, i, 341.

361. "However irritated they might be by La Fayette's behavior at the outset of the Revolution, the present conduct of the monarchs toward him was neither to be vindicated by morality, the law of nations, nor the rules of sound policy. Even if he had been amenable for a crime against his own country, we know not what right Austria or Prussia had to take cognizance of it."—*Scott's Life of Napoleon*.

362. "Such were the reasonings and expressions of Mr. Burke on this striking occasion. So entirely was the mind of this extraordinary man now over excited and overthrown; so entirely estranged from those elevated feelings and that spirit of philanthropic wisdom which have made his speeches in the American contest, and many paragraphs of his Reflections on this Revolution of France, so justly the admiration of mankind."—*Prof. Smyth's Lectures on the French Revolution*, vol. ii., p. 409.

363. Jean Debry, in the Assembly, exclaimed with fervor, "The most instant and vigorous measures must be adopted in defense of our country. The expense must not be thought of. Within fifteen days we shall enjoy freedom or meet with death. If we are conquered we shall have no need of money, for we shall not exist. If we are victorious, still we shall not feel the want of money, for we shall be *free*."—*Journal of John Moore, M.D.*, vol. i., p. 116.

364. "The intelligence of the flight of La Fayette, the entry of the army of the coalition into the French territory, the capture of Longwy, and the surrender of Verdun burst like thunder in Paris, and filled every heart with consternation, for France had never approached more nearly those sinister days which presage the decay of nations. Every thing was dead in her save the desire of living; the enthusiasm of the country and liberty survived. Abandoned by all, the country did not abandon itself. Two things were required to save it—time and a dictatorship. Time? The heroism of Dumouriez afforded it. The dictatorship? Danton assumed it in the name of the Commune of Paris."—*Lamartine, Hist. Gir.*, vol, ii., p. 119.

365. Dr. John Moore, a very intelligent English physician, who, in company with Lord Lauderdale, was in Paris during all these scenes, writes in his journal, "This search was made accordingly in the course of last night and this morning. The commissioners were attended with a body of the National Guards, and all avenues of the section were watched to prevent any persons from escaping. They did not come to our hotel till about six in the morning. I attended them through every room, and opened every door of our apartments. They behaved with great civility. We had no arms but pistols, which lay openly on the chimney. They admired the nicety of the workmanship of one pair, but never offered to take them."—Vol. i., p. 116.

366. "The people are told that there was a horrid plot between the Duke of Brunswick and certain traitors in Paris; that as soon as all the new levies were completed, and all the men intended for the frontiers had marched out of Paris, then those same traitors were to take command of a large body of men, now dispersed over the capital and its environs, who have been long in the pay of the court, though they also are concealed; that these concealed leaders at the head of their concealed troops were to have thrown open the prisons and to arm the prisoners, then to go to the Temple, set the royal family free, and proclaim the king; to condemn to death all the Patriots who remain in Paris, and most of the wives and children of those who have marched out of it against the enemies of their country."—*Moore's Journal*, vol. i., p. 144.

367. "Some inexplicable and consolatory acts astonish us amid these horrors. The compassion of Maillard appeared to seek for the innocent with as much care as his vengeance sought for the guilty. He exposed his life to snatch victims from his executions."—*Lamartine, History of the Girondists*, vol. ii., p. 140.

368. M. Chabot, a patriotic orator, who had been a Franciscan friar, spoke in the Society of Jacobins as follows of Marat: "Marat is reproached with being of a sanguinary disposition; that he contributed to the late massacres in the prisons. But in so doing he acted in the true spirit of the Revolution, for it was not to be expected that while our bravest patriots were on the frontiers we should remain here exposed to the rage of the prisoners, who were promised arms and the opportunity of assassinating us. It is well known that the plan of the aristocrats has always been, and still is, to make a general carnage of the common people. Now, as the number of the latter is to that of the former in the proportion of ninety-nine to one, it is evident that he who proposes to kill one to prevent the killing of ninety-nine is not a blood-thirsty man."

369. Lamartine, *History of the Girondists*, ii., 132.

370. Dr. Moore, while denouncing in the strongest terms the brutality of the populace, says, "In such an abominable system of oppression as the French labored under before the Revolution, when the will of one man could control the course of law, and his mandate tear any citizen from the arms of his family and throw him into a dungeon for years or for life—in a country where such a system of government prevails, insurrection, being the sole means of redress, is not only justifiable, but it is the duty of every lover of mankind and of his country, as soon as any occasion presents itself which promises success."

371. "Amid the disorders and sad events which have taken place in this country of late, it is impossible not to admire the generous spirit which glows all over the nation in support of its independency. No country ever displayed a nobler or more patriotic enthusiasm than pervades France at this period, and which glows with increasing ardor since the publication of the Duke of Brunswick's manifesto, and the entrance of the Prussians into the country. None but those whose minds are obscured by prejudice or perverted by selfishness will refuse this justice to the general spirit displayed by the French in defense of their national independence. A detestation of the excesses committed at Paris, not only is compatible with an admiration of this spirit, but it is such well-informed minds alone as possess sufficient candor and sensibility to admire the one, who can have a due horror of the other."—*Journal of John Moore, M.D.*, vol. i., p. 160.

372. "The young Macdonald, descended from a Scotch family transplanted to France, was aid-de-camp to Dumouriez. He learned at the camp of Grandpré, under his commander, how to save a country. Subsequently he learned, under Napoleon, how to illustrate it. A hero at his

first step, he became a marshal of France at the end of his life."—*Lamartine, Hist. Gir.*, ii., 158.

373. History of the Girondists, by Lamartine, ii., 185.

Chapter XXX.
The King Led to Trial

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Assassination of Royalists at Versailles.—Jacobin Ascendency.—The National Convention.—Two Parties, the Girondists and the Jacobins.—Abolition of Royalty.—Madame Roland.—Battle of Jemappes.—Mode of life in the Temple.—Insults to the Royal Family.—New Acts of Rigor.—Trial of the King.—Separation of the Royal Family.—The Indictment.—The King begs for Bread.

The massacre of the Royalists in Paris was not followed by any general violence throughout the kingdom, for it was in Paris alone that the Patriots were in imminent danger. In Orleans, however, there were a number of Royalists imprisoned under the accusation of treason. These prisoners were brought to Versailles on the night of the 9th of September to be tried. A band of assassins from Paris rushed upon the carriages, dispersed the escort, and most brutally murdered forty-seven out of fifty-three.[375] They then went to the prison, where twelve were taken out, and, after a summary trial, assassinated.

In the mean time elections were going on for the National Convention. The Jacobin Clubs, now generally dominant throughout France, almost every where controlled the elections. Some sober Patriots hoped that the Convention would be disposed and able to check the swelling flood of anarchy. But others, when they saw that the most violent Revolutionists were chosen as deputies, and that they would be able to overawe the more moderate Patriots by the terrors of the mob, began to despair of their country. Paris sent to the Convention Robespierre, Danton, Marat, Chabot, and others who have attained terrible notoriety through scenes of consternation and blood. The Girondists in the Convention, Vergniaud, Condorcet, Barbaroux, Gensonné, though much in the minority, were heroic men, illustrious in intelligence and virtue. There was no longer a

Royalist party, not even a Constitutional Royalist party, which dared to avow itself in France. The court and the Allies had driven France to the absolute necessity of a Republic.

On the 20th of September the Legislative Assembly was dissolved, and at the same hour and in the same hall the National Convention commenced its session. The spirit of the Girondists may be seen in their first motion.

"Citizen representatives," said M. Manuel, "in this place every thing ought to be stamped with a character of such dignity and grandeur as to fill the world with awe. I propose that the President of the Assembly be lodged in the Tuileries, that in public he shall be preceded by guards, that the members shall rise when he opens the Assembly. Cineas, the embassador of Pyrrhus, on being introduced to the Roman senate, said that they appeared like an assembly of kings."

This proposition was contemptuously voted down by the Jacobins. Collot d'Herbois, one of the leading Jacobins, then proposed the immediate abolition of royalty. "The word king," said he, "is still a talisman, whose magic power may create many disorders. The abolition of royalty therefore is necessary. Kings are in the moral world that which monsters are in the natural. Courts are always the centre of corruption and the work-houses of crime."

No one ventured to oppose this, and the president declared that by a unanimous vote *royalty was abolished*. It was then voted the 22d of September, 1792, should be considered the first day of the first year of the Republic, and that all documents should follow the date of this era. It was on the eve of this day that intelligence arrived of the cannonade of Valmy, in which the Patriot armies had beaten back the foe. For one short night Paris was radiant with joy.

The most illustrious of the Girondists met that evening in the saloon of Madame Roland, and celebrated, with almost religious enthusiasm, the advent of the Republic. Madame Roland, in the accomplishment of the most intense desire of her heart, appeared radiant with almost supernatural brilliance and beauty. It was observed that M. Roland gazed upon her with a peculiar expression of fondness. The noble and gifted Vergniaud conversed but little, and pensive thoughts seemed to chasten his joy.

At the close of the entertainment he filled his glass, and proposed to drink to the eternity of the Republic.

"Permit me," said Madame Roland, "after the manner of the ancients, to scatter some rose-leaves from my bouquet in your glass."

Vergniaud held out his glass, and some leaves were scattered on the wine. He then said, in words strongly prophetic of their fate, "We should quaff, not roses, but cypress-leaves, in our wine to-night. In drinking to a republic, stained at its birth with the blood of September, who knows that we do not drink to our own death? No matter; were this wine my blood, I would drain it to liberty and equality."

To this all responded with the words *Vive la République*. But a few months elapsed ere almost every individual then present perished on the scaffold.

BATTLE OF JEMAPPES.

In the mean time Dumouriez, with thirty-five thousand men, was pursuing a division of the retreating Allies, consisting of twenty-five thousand Austrians, under General Clairfayt, through Belgium. On the 4th of November he overtook them strongly intrenched upon the heights of Jemappes. One day was consumed in bringing up his forces and arranging his batteries for the assault. Sixty thousand men were now arrayed for a deadly strife. One hundred pieces of cannon were in battery to hurl into the dense ranks destruction and death. On the morning of the 6th the storm of war commenced. All the day long it raged with pitiless fury. In the evening ten thousand of the dying and the dead covered the ground, and the Austrians were every where retreating in dismay. This new victory caused great rejoicing in Paris, and inspired the revolutionary party with new courage.

The day at length arrived for the trial of the king. It was the 11th of December. For four months the royal family, with ever-alternating hopes and fears, which had been gradually deepening into despair, had now endured the rigors of captivity. The king, with that wonderful equanimity which distinguished him through all these days of trial, immediately upon taking possession of his gloomy abode introduced system into the employment of his time.

His room was on the third story. He usually rose at six o'clock, shaved himself, and carefully dressed his hair. He then entered a small room or closet, which opened from his sleeping-room, and engaged in devotional reading and prayer for an hour. He was not allowed to close the door, for a municipal officer ever stationed in his room was enjoined never to allow the king to leave his sight. He then read till nine o'clock, during which time his faithful servant, Clery, put the room in order, and spread the table for the breakfast of the royal family. At nine o'clock the queen, the children, and Madame Elizabeth came up from the rooms which they occupied below to breakfast.

The meal occupied an hour. The royal family then all descended to the queen's room, where they passed the day. The king employed himself in instructing his son, giving him lessons in geography, which was a favorite study of the king; teaching him to draw and color maps, and to recite choice passages from Corneille and Racine. The queen assumed the

education of her daughter, while her own hands and those of Madame Elizabeth were busy in needle-work, knitting, and working tapestry.

At one o'clock, when the weather was fine, the royal family were conducted by four municipal officers into the spacious but dilapidated garden for exercise and the open air. The officials who guarded the king were frequently changed. Sometimes they chanced to be men of humane character, who, though devoted to the disinthrallment of France from the terrible despotism of ages, still pitied the king as the victim of circumstances, and treated him with kindness and respect. But more generally these men were vulgar and rabid Jacobins, who exulted in the opportunity of wreaking upon the king the meanest revenge. They chalked upon the walls of the prison, "The guillotine is permanent and ready for the tyrant Louis." "Madame Veto shall swing." "The little wolves must be strangled." Under a gallows, to which a figure was suspended, was inscribed the words, "Louis taking an air-bath." From such ribald insults the monarch had no protection.

A burly brutal wretch, named Rocher, was one of the keepers of the Tower. He went swaggering about with a bunch of enormous keys clattering at his belt, seeming to glory in his power of annoying, by petty insults, a *king* and a *queen*. When the royal family were going out into the garden he would go before them to unlock the doors. Making a great demonstration in rattling his keys, and affecting much difficulty in finding the right one, all the party would be kept waiting while he made all possible delay and noise in drawing the bolts and swinging open the ponderous doors. At the side of the last door he not unfrequently stationed himself with his pipe in his mouth, and puffed tobacco-smoke into the faces of the king, the queen, and the children. Some of the guards stationed around would burst into insulting laughter in view of these indignities, which the king endured with meekness which seems supernatural.

LOUIS XVI. AND THE ROYAL FAMILY IN THE TEMPLE.

The recital of such conduct makes the blood boil in one's veins, and leads one almost to detest the very name of liberty. But then we must not forget that it was despotism which formed these hideous characters; that, age after age and century after century, kings and nobles had been trampling upon the people, crushing their rights, lacerating their heart-strings, dooming fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, by millions upon millions, to beggary, degradation, and woe. It was time for the people to rise at every hazard and break these chains. And while humanity must weep over the woes of Louis XVI. and his unhappy household, humanity can not forget that there are other families and other hearts who claim her sympathies, and that this very Louis XVI. was at this very time doing every thing in his power, by the aid of the armies of foreign despots, to bring the millions of France again under the sway of the most merciless

despotism. And it can not be questioned that, had kings and nobles regained their power, they would have wreaked a more terrible vengeance upon the re-enslaved people than the people wreaked upon them.

For an hour the royal family continued walking in the garden. From the roofs of the adjacent houses and the higher windows they could be seen. Every day at noon these roofs and windows were crowded by those anxious to obtain a view of the melancholy group of captives. Frequently they were cheered by gestures of affection from unknown friends. Tender words were occasionally unrolled in capital letters, or a flower to which a pebble was attached would fall at their feet. These tokens of love, slight as they were, came as a balm to their lacerated hearts. So highly did they prize them, that regardless of rain, cold, and snow, and the intolerable insults of their guards, they looked forward daily with eagerness to their garden walk. They recognized particular localities as belonging to their friends, saying, "such a house is devoted to us; such a story is for us; such a room is loyal; such a window friendly."

At two o'clock the royal family returned to the king's room, where dinner was served. After dinner the king took a nap, while the queen, Madame Elizabeth, and the young princess employed themselves with their needles, and the dauphin played some game with Clery, whose name should be transmitted with honor to posterity as faithful in misfortune. When the king awoke from his nap he usually read aloud to his family for an hour or two until supper-time. Soon after supper, the queen, with her children and Madame Elizabeth, retired to their rooms for the night. With hearts bound together by these terrible griefs, they never parted but with a tender and sorrowful adieu.[376]

Such was the monotonous life of the royal family during the four months they occupied the Temple before the trial of the king. But almost every day of their captivity some new act of rigor was enforced upon them. As the armies of the Allies drew nearer, and city after city was falling before their bombardments, and Paris was in a phrensy of terror, apprehensions of a conspiracy of the king with the Royalists, and of their rising and aiding the invaders with an outburst of civil war, led to the adoption of precautions most irksome to the captives.

Municipal officers never allowed any member of the royal family to be out of their sight, except when they retired to bed at night. They then locked the doors, and placed a bed against the entrance to each apartment, and there an officer slept, so as to prevent all possibility of egress. Every day Santerre, commander of the National Guard, made a visit of inspection to all the rooms with his staff. At first the royal family had been allowed pen, ink, and paper, but this privilege was soon withdrawn, and at last the cruel and useless measure was adopted of taking from them all sharp instruments, such as knives, scissors, and even needles, thus depriving the ladies not only of a great solace, but of the power of repairing their decaying apparel. It was not the intention of the Legislative Assembly that the royal family should be exposed to needless suffering. Four hundred dollars were placed in their hands at the commencement of their captivity for their petty expenses, and the Governor of the Temple was ordered to purchase for them whatever they might need, five hundred thousand francs ($100,000) having been appropriated by the Convention for their expenses.[377]

They were not allowed to see the daily journals, which would have informed them of the triumphant march of the Allies, but occasionally papers were sent to them which recorded the victories of the Republic. Clery, however, devised a very shrewd expedient to give them some information of the events which were transpiring. He hired a newsman to pass daily by the windows of the Temple, under the pretense of selling newspapers, and to cry out the principal details contained in them. Clery, while apparently busy about the room, was always sure to be near the window at the appointed hour, listening attentively. At night, stooping over the king's bed to adjust the curtains, he hastily whispered the news he had thus gathered. All this required the greatest caution, for a municipal officer was always in the room, watching every movement.

Early in the morning of the 11th of December all Paris was in commotion to witness the trial of the king, which was to commence on that day. The beating of drums in the street, the mustering of military squadrons at their appointed places of rendezvous, the clatter of hoofs, and the rumbling of artillery over the pavements penetrated even the gloomy

apartments of the Temple, and fell appallingly upon the ears of the victims there.

The royal family were at breakfast as they heard these ominous sounds, and they earnestly inquired the cause. After some hesitation the king was informed that the Mayor of Paris would soon come to conduct him to his trial, and that the troops gathering around the Temple were to form his escort. He was also required immediately to take leave of his family, and told that he could not be permitted to see them again until after his trial. Expressions of heart-rending anguish and floods of tears accompanied this cruel separation. The king pleaded earnestly and with gushing eyes that, at least, he might enjoy the society of his little son, saying,

"What, gentlemen! deprive me of even the presence of my son—a child of seven years!"

But the commissioners were inexorable. "The Commune thinks," said they, "that, since you are to be *au secret* during your trial, your son must necessarily be confined either with you or his mother; and it has imposed the privation upon that parent who, from his sex and courage, was best able to support it."

The queen, with the children and Madame Elizabeth, were conducted to the rooms below. The king, overwhelmed with anguish, threw himself into a chair, buried his face in his hands, and, without uttering a word, remained immovable as a statue for two hours. At noon M. Chambon,[378] the Mayor of Paris, with Santerre, commander of the National Guard, and a group of officers, all wearing the tricolored scarf, entered the king's chamber.

Chambon, with solemnity and with a faltering voice, informed the king of the painful object of their mission, and summoned him, in the name of the Convention, as *Louis Capet*, to appear before their bar.

"Gentlemen," replied the king, "Capet is not my name. It is the name of one of my ancestors. I could have wished that my son, at least, had been permitted to remain with me during the two hours I have awaited you. However, this treatment is but a part of the system adopted toward me throughout my captivity. I follow you, not in obedience to the orders of the Convention, but because my enemies are more powerful than I."

Immediately rising, he put on his great-coat, took his hat, and, following the mayor, and followed by the staff of officers, descended the stairs of the tower.

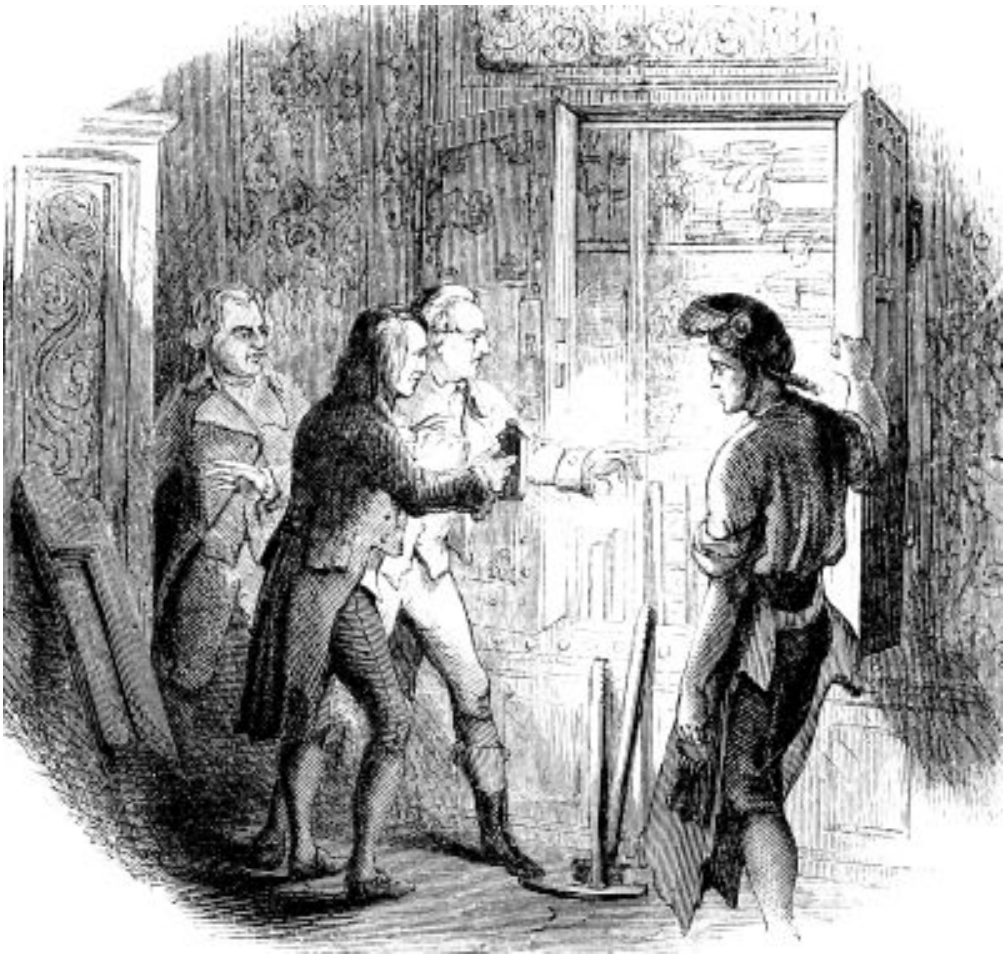
Before the massive portal of the Temple the carriage of the mayor was drawn up, surrounded by a guard of six hundred picked men. A numerous detachment of cavalry, as an advance-guard, dragging six pieces of cannon, led the melancholy procession which was conducting a monarch to the judgment-bar and to death. A similar body of cavalry followed in the rear with three pieces of cannon. These precautions were deemed necessary to guard against any possible rescue by the Royalists. Every soldier was supplied with sixteen rounds of cartridges, and the battalions marched in such order that they could instantly form in line of battle. The National Guard lined the streets through which they passed, one hundred thousand men being under arms in Paris that day.

The cavalcade passed slowly along the Boulevards. The house-tops, the windows, the side-walks, were thronged with countless thousands. The king, deprived of his razor, had been unable to shave, and his face was covered with shaggy hair; his natural corpulence, wasted away by imprisonment, caused his garments to hang loose and flabby about him; his features were wan through anxiety and suffering. Thus, unfortunately, every thing in his personal appearance combined to present an aspect exciting disgust and repulsion rather than sympathy. The procession passed down the Place Vendôme and thence to the Monastery of the Feuillants. The king alighted. Santerre took his arm and led him to the bar of the Convention. There was a moment of profound silence. All were awe-stricken by the solemnity of the scene. The president, Barrere,[379] broke the silence, saying,

"Citizens! Louis Capet is before you. The eyes of Europe are upon you. Posterity will judge you with inflexible severity. Preserve, then, the dignity and the dispassionate coolness befitting judges. You are about to give a great lesson to kings, a great and useful example to nations. Recollect the awful silence which accompanied Louis from Varennes—a silence that was the precursor of the judgment of kings by the people." Then, turning to the king, Barrere said, "Louis, the French nation accuses

you. Be seated, and listen to the Act of Accusation." It was then two o'clock in the afternoon.

The formidable indictment was read. The king was held personally responsible for all the acts of hostility to popular liberty which had occurred under his reign. A minute, truthful, impartial recapitulation of those acts, which we have recorded in the previous pages, constituted the accusation. The king listened attentively to the reading, and without any apparent emotion. The accusation consisted of fifty-seven distinct charges. As they were slowly read over, one by one, the president paused after each and said to the king, "What have you to answer?" But two courses consistent with kingly dignity were open for the accused. The one was to refuse any reply and to take shelter in the inviolability with which the Constitution had invested him. The other was boldly to avow that he had adopted the measures of which he was accused, believing it to be essential to the welfare of France that the headlong progress of the Revolution should be checked. Neither would have saved his life, but either would have rescued his memory from much reproach. But the king, cruelly deprived of all counsel with his friends, dragged unexpectedly to his trial, and overwhelmed with such a catalogue of accusations, unfortunately adopted the worst possible course. The blame of some of the acts he threw upon his ministers; some facts he denied; and in other cases he not only prevaricated but stooped to palpable falsehood. When we reflect upon the weak nature of the king and the confusion of mind incident to an hour of such terrible trial, we must judge the unhappy monarch leniently. But when the king denied even the existence of the iron chest which the Convention had already found, and had obtained proof to demonstration that he himself had closed up, and when he denied complicity with the Allies, proofs of which, in his own handwriting, were found in the iron safe, it is not strange that the effect should have been exceedingly unfavorable to his defense.[380]



DISCOVERY OF THE IRON SAFE.

This interrogation was continued for three hours, at the close of which the king, who had eaten nothing since his interrupted breakfast, was so exhausted that he could hardly stand. Santerre then conducted him into an adjoining committee-room. Before withdrawing, however, the king demanded a copy of the accusation, and counsel to assist him in his defense. In the committee-room the king saw a man eating from a small loaf of bread. Faint with hunger, the monarch approached the man, and, in a whisper, implored a morsel for himself.

"Ask aloud," said the man, retreating, "for what you want." He feared that he should be suspected of some secret conspiracy with the king.

"I am hungry," said Louis XVI., "and ask for a piece of your bread."

"Divide it with me," said the man. "It is a Spartan breakfast. If I had a root I would give you half."

The king entered the carriage eating his crust. The same cavalcade as in the morning preceded and accompanied him. The same crowds thronged the streets and every point of observation. A few brutal wretches, insulting helplessness, shouted *Vive la Révolution!* and now and then a stanza of the Marseillaise Hymn fell painfully upon his ear. Chambon, the mayor, and Chaumette, the public prosecutor, were in the carriage with the king. Louis, having eaten as much of the half loaf of bread as he needed, had still a fragment in his hand.

"What shall I do with it?" inquired the simple-hearted monarch. Chaumette relieved him of his embarrassment by tossing it out of the window.

"Ah," said the king, "it is a pity to throw bread away when it is so dear."

"True," replied Chaumette; "my grandmother used to say to me, 'Little boy, never waste a crumb of bread; you can not make one.'"[381]

"Monsieur Chaumette," Louis rejoined, "your grandmother appears to me to have been a woman of great good sense."

It was half-past six o'clock, and the gloom of night enveloped the Temple, when Louis was again conducted up the stairs of the tower to his dismal cell. He piteously implored permission again to see his family. But Chambon dared not grant his request in disobedience to the commands of the Commune.

The most frivolous things often develop character. It is on record that the toils and griefs of the day had not impaired the appetite of the king, and that he ate for supper that night "six cutlets, a considerable portion of a fowl, two eggs, and drank two glasses of white wine and one of Alicante wine, and forthwith went to bed."[382]

During these dreadful hours the queen, with Madame Elizabeth and the children, were in a state of agonizing suspense, not even knowing but that the king was being led to his execution. Clery, however, late in the evening, went to their room and informed them of all the details he had been able to gather respecting the king's examination.

"Has any mention been made of the queen?" asked Madame Elizabeth. "Her name was not mentioned," Clery replied, "in the act of accusation."

"Ah," rejoined the princess, "perhaps they demand my brother's life as necessary for their safety; but the queen—these poor children—what obstacle can their lives present to their ambition?"

FOOTNOTES:

374. Napoleon at St. Helena, 394.

375. Peltier.

376. The queen undressed the dauphin, when he repeated the following prayer, composed by the queen and remembered and recorded by her daughter: "Almighty God, who created and redeemed me, I love you! Preserve the days of my father and my family. Protect us against our enemies. Give my mother, my aunt, my sister, the strength they need to support their troubles."—*Lamartine, History of the Girondists*, vol. ii., p. 287.

377. "We must not exaggerate the faults of human nature, and suppose that, adding an execrable meanness to the fury of fanaticism, the keepers of the imprisoned family imposed on it unworthy privations, with the intention of rendering the remembrance of its past greatness the more painful. Distrust was the sole cause of certain refusals. Thus, while the dread of plots and secret communications prevented them from admitting more than one attendant into the interior of the prison, a numerous establishment was employed in preparing their food. Thirteen persons were engaged in the duties of the kitchen, situated at some distance from the tower. The report of the expenses of the Temple, where the greatest decency is observed, where the prisoners are mentioned with respect, where their sobriety is commended, where Louis XVI. is justified from the low reproach of being too much addicted to wine—these reports, which are not liable to suspicion, make the total expenses of the table amount in two months to 28,745 livres ($5749)."—*Thiers*, vol. ii., p. 26.

378. "M. Chambon, the successor of Bailly and Pétion, was a learned and humane physician, whom public esteem rather than Revolutionary favor had raised to the dignity of the first magistrate of Paris. Of *modéré* principles, kind and warm-hearted, accustomed, by his profession, to sympathize with the unfortunate, compelled to execute orders repugnant to his feelings, the pity of the man was visible beneath the inflexibility of the magistrate."—*Lamartine, Hist. des Girondistes*, vol. ii., p. 321.

379. "Barrere escaped during the different ebullitions of the Revolution because he was a man, without principle or character, who changed and adapted himself to every side. He had the reputation of being a man of talent, but I did not find him such. I employed him to write, but he displayed no ability. He used many flowers of rhetoric, but no solid argument."—*Napoleon at St. Helena*.

380. Gamain, the locksmith, who for ten years had worked for and with the king, and who had aided him in constructing this iron safe, basely betrayed the secret. The papers were all seized and intrusted by the Convention to a committee of twelve, who were to examine and report upon them. This Judas received, as his reward from the Convention, a pension of two hundred and forty dollars a year. See France and its Revolutions, by Geo. Long, Esq., p. 241.

Chapter XXXI.
Execution of Louis XVI

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Close of the Examination.—The King's Counsel.—Heroism of Malesherbes.—Preparations for Defense.—Gratitude of the King.—The Trial.—Protracted Vote.—The Result.—The King solicits the Delay of Execution for three Days.—Last Interview with his Family.—Preparation for Death.—The Execution.

As soon as the king had withdrawn from the Assembly, that body was thrown into great tumult in consequence of the application of Louis for the assistance of counsel. It was, however, after an animated debate, which continued until the next day, voted that the request of the king should be granted, and a deputation was immediately sent to inform the king of the vote, and to ask what counsel he would choose. He selected two of the most eminent lawyers of Paris—M. Tronchet and M. Target. Tronchet heroically accepted the perilous commission. Target, with pusillanimity which has consigned his name to disgrace, wrote a letter to the Convention stating that his principles would not allow him to undertake the defense of the king.[383] The venerable Malesherbes, then seventy years of age, immediately wrote a letter to the president, imploring permission to assume the defense of the monarch. This distinguished statesman, a friend of monarchy and a personal friend of the monarch, had been living in the retirement of his country-seat, and had taken no part in the Revolution. By permission of the Commune he was conducted, after he had been carefully searched, to the Temple. With a faltering step he entered the prison of the king. Louis XVI. was seated reading Tacitus. The king immediately arose, threw his arms around Malesherbes in a cordial embrace, and said,

"Ah, is it you, my friend! In what a situation do you find me! See to what my passion for the amelioration of the state of the people, whom we

have both loved so much, has reduced me! Why do you come hither? Your devotion only endangers your life and can not save mine."

Malesherbes, with eyes full of tears, endeavored to cheer the king with words of hope.

"No!" replied the monarch, sadly. "They will condemn me, for they possess both the power and the will. No matter; let us occupy ourselves with the cause as if we were to gain it. I shall gain it in fact, since I shall leave no stain upon my memory."

The two defenders of the king were permitted to associate with them a third, M. Deséze, an advocate who had attained much renown in his profession. For a fortnight they were employed almost night and day in preparing for the defense. Malesherbes came every morning with the daily papers, and prepared for the labors of the evening. At five o'clock Tronchet and Deséze came, and they all worked together until nine.

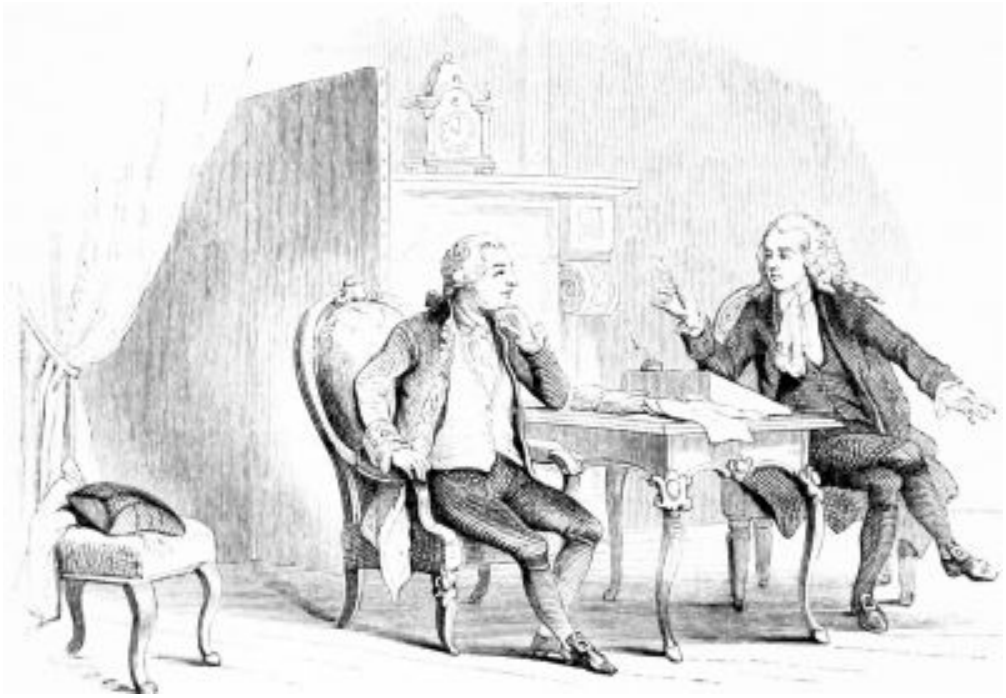
In the mean time the king wrote his will; a very affecting document, breathing in every line the spirit of a Christian. He also succeeded in so far eluding the vigilance of his keepers as to open a slight correspondence with his family. The queen pricked a message with a pin upon a scrap of paper, and then concealed the paper in a ball of thread, which was dropped into a drawer in the kitchen, where Clery took it and conveyed it to his master. An answer was returned in a similar way. It was but an unsatisfactory correspondence which could thus be carried on; but even this was an unspeakable solace to the captives.

At length the plan of defense was completed. Malesherbes and the king had furnished the facts, Tronchet and Deséze had woven them all into an exceedingly eloquent and affecting appeal. Deséze read it aloud to the king and his associates. The pathetic picture he drew of the vicissitudes of the royal family was so touching that even Malesherbes and Tronchet could not refrain from weeping, and tears fell from the eyes of the king. At the close of the reading, the king turned to Deséze, and, in the spirit of true majesty of soul, said,

"I have to request of you to make a painful sacrifice. Strike out of your pleading the peroration. It is enough for me to appear before such judges and show my entire innocence. I will not move their feelings."[384]

Deséze was very reluctant to accede to this request, but was constrained to yield. After Tronchet and Deséze had retired that night, the king, left alone with Malesherbes, seemed to be troubled with some engrossing thought. At last he said,

"I have now a new source of regret. Deséze and Tronchet owe me nothing. They devote to me their time, exertions, and perhaps their life. How can I requite them? I possess nothing; and were I to leave them a legacy it would not be paid; besides, what fortune could repay such a debt?"



LOUIS XVI. AND MALESHERBES.

"Sire," replied Malesherbes, "their consciences and posterity will reward them. But it is in your power to grant them a favor they will esteem more than all those you had it in your power to bestow upon them formerly."

"What is it?" added the king.

"Sire, embrace them," Malesherbes replied.

The next day, when they entered his chamber, the king approached them and pressed each to his heart in silence. This touching testimonial of the king's gratitude, and of his impoverishment, was to the noble hearts of these noble men an ample remuneration for all their toil and peril.

The 26th of December had now arrived, the day appointed for the final trial. At an early hour all Paris was in commotion, and the whole military force of the metropolis was again marshaled. The sublimity of the occasion seemed to have elevated the character of the king to unusual dignity. He was neatly dressed, his beard shaved, and his features were serene and almost majestic in their expression of imperturbable resignation. As he rode in the carriage with Chambon, the mayor, and Santerre, the commander of the National Guard, he conversed cheerfully upon a variety of topics. Santerre, regardless of the etiquette which did not allow a subject to wear his hat in the presence of his monarch, sat with his hat on. The king turned to him, and said, with a smile,

"The last time, sir, you conveyed me to the Temple, in your hurry you forgot your hat; and now, I perceive, you are determined to make up for the omission."

On entering the Convention the king took his seat by the side of his counsel, and listened with intense interest to the reading of his defense, watching the countenances of his judges to see the effect it was producing upon their minds. Occasionally he whispered, and even with a smile, to Malesherbes and Tronchet. The Convention received the defense in profound silence.

The defense consisted of three leading divisions. First, it was argued that by the Constitution the king was inviolable, and not responsible for the acts of the crown—that the Ministers alone were responsible. He secondly argued that the Convention had no right to try the king, for the Convention were his accusers, and, consequently, could not act as his judges. Thirdly, while protesting, as above, the inviolability of the king, and the invalidity of the Convention to judge him, he then proceeded to the discussion of the individual charges. Some of the charges were triumphantly repelled, particularly that of shedding French blood on the 10th of August. It was clearly proved that the people, not Louis XVI., were the aggressors. As soon as Deséze had finished his defense, the king himself rose and said, in a few words which he had written and committed to memory,

"You have heard the grounds of my defense. I shall not repeat them. In addressing you, perhaps for the last time, I declare that my conscience reproaches me with nothing, and that my defenders have told you the truth.

I have never feared to have my public conduct scrutinized. But I am grieved to find that I am accused of wishing to shed the blood of my people, and that the misfortunes of the 10th of August are laid to my charge. I confess that the numerous proofs I have always given of my love for the people ought to have placed me above this reproach."

He resumed his seat. The President then asked if he had any thing more to say. He declared he had not, and retired with his counsel from the hall. As he was conducted back to the Temple, he conversed with the same serenity he had manifested throughout the whole day. It was five o'clock, and the gloom of night was descending upon the city as he re-entered his prison.

No sooner had the king left the hall than a violent tumult of debate commenced, which was continued, day after day, with a constant succession of eager, agitated speakers hurrying to the tribune, for twelve days. Some were in favor of an immediate judgment, some were for referring the question to the people; some demanded the death of the king, others imprisonment or exile. On the 7th of January all seemed weary of these endless speeches, and the endless repetition of the same arguments. Still, there were many clamorous to be heard; and, after a violent contest, it was voted that the decisive measure should be postponed for a week longer, and that on the 14th of January the question should be taken.

The fatal day arrived. It was decreed that the subject should be presented to the Convention in the three following questions: *First*, Is Louis guilty? *Second*, Shall the decision of the Convention be submitted to the ratification of the people? The whole of the 15th was occupied in taking these two votes. Louis was unanimously pronounced to be guilty, with the exception of ten who refused to vote, declaring themselves incapable of acting both as accusers and judges. On the question of an appeal to the people, 281 voices were for it, 423 against it.[385] And now came the *third* great and solemn question, What shall be the sentence? Each member was required to write his vote, sign it, and then, before depositing it, to ascend the tribune and give it audibly, with any remarks which he might wish to add.

The voting commenced at seven o'clock in the evening of the 16th, and continued all night, and without any interruption, for twenty-four hours.

All Paris was during the time in the highest state of excitement, the galleries of the Convention being crowded to suffocation. Some voted for death, others for imprisonment until peace with allied Europe, and then banishment. Others voted for death, with the restriction that the execution should be delayed. They wished to save the king, and yet feared the accusation of being Royalists if they did not vote for his death. The Jacobins all voted for death. They had accused their opponents, the Girondists, of being secretly in favor of royality, and as such had held them up to the execration of the mob. The Girondists wished to save the king. It was in their power to save him. But it required more courage, both moral and physical, than ordinary men possess, to brave the vengeance of the assassins of September who were hovering around the hall.

It was pretty well understood in the Convention that the fate of the king depended upon the Girondist vote, and it was not doubted that the party would vote as did their leader. It was a moment of fearful solemnity when Vergniaud ascended the tribune. Breathless silence pervaded the Assembly. Every eye was fixed upon him. His countenance was pallid as that of a corpse. For a moment he paused, with downcast eyes, as if hesitating to pronounce the dreadful word. Then, in a gloomy tone which thrilled the hearts of all present, he said, *Death*.[386] Nearly all the Girondists voted for death, with the restriction of delaying the execution. Many of the purest men in the nation thus voted, with emotions of sadness which could not be repressed. The noble Carnot gave his vote in the following terms: "Death; and never did word weigh so heavily on my heart."

When the Duke of Orleans was called, deep silence ensued. He was cousin of the king, and first prince of the blood. By birth and opulence he stood on the highest pinnacle of aristocratic supremacy. Conscious of peril, he had for a long time done every thing in his power to conciliate the mob by adopting the most radical of Jacobin opinions. The Duke, bloated with the debaucheries which had disgraced his life, ascended the steps slowly, unfolded a paper, and read in heartless tones these words:

> "Solely occupied with my duty, convinced that all who have attempted, or shall attempt hereafter, the sovereignty of the people, merit death, I vote for death."

The atrocity of this act excited the abhorrence of the Assembly, and loud murmurs of disapprobation followed the prince to his seat. Even Robespierre despised his pusillanimity, and said,

"The miserable man was only required to listen to his own heart, and make himself an exception. But he would not or dare not do so. The nation would have been more magnanimous than he."[387]

At length the long scrutiny was over, and Vergniaud, who had presided, rose to announce the result. He was pale as death, and it was observed that not only his voice faltered, but that his whole frame trembled.

"Citizens," said he, "you are about to exercise a great act of justice. I hope humanity will enjoin you to keep the most perfect silence. When justice has spoken humanity ought to be listened to in its turn."

He then read the results of the vote. There were seven hundred and twenty-one voters in the Convention. Three hundred and thirty-four voted for imprisonment or exile, three hundred and eighty-seven for death, including those who voted that the execution should be delayed. Thus the majority for death was fifty-three; but as of these forty-six demanded a suspension of the execution, there remained but a majority of seven for immediate death. Having read this result, Vergniaud, in a sorrowful tone, said, "I declare, in the name of the Convention, that the punishment pronounced against Louis Capet is death."[388]

The counsel of Louis XVI., who, during the progress of the vote, had urged permission to speak, but were refused, were now introduced. In the name of the king, Deséze appealed to the people from the judgment of the Convention. He urged the appeal from the very small majority which had decided the penalty. Tronchet urged that the penal code required a vote of two thirds to consign one to punishment, and that the king ought not to be deprived of a privilege which every subject enjoyed. Malesherbes endeavored to speak, but was so overcome with emotion that, violently sobbing, he was unable to continue his speech, and was compelled to sit down. His gray hairs and his tears so moved the Assembly that Vergniaud rose, and, addressing the Assembly, said, "Will you decree the honors of the sitting to the defenders of Louis XVI.?" The unanimous response was, "Yes, yes."

It was now late at night, and the Convention adjourned. The whole of the 18th and the 19th were occupied in discussing the question of the appeal to the people. On the 20th, at three o'clock in the morning, the final vote was taken. Three hundred and ten voted to sustain the appeal; three hundred and eighty for immediate death. All the efforts to save the king were now exhausted, and his fate was sealed. A deputation was immediately appointed, headed by Garat, Minister of Justice, to acquaint Louis XVI. with the decree of the Convention.

At two o'clock in the afternoon of the 20th, Louis heard the noise of a numerous party ascending the steps of the tower. As they entered his apartment he rose and stepped forward with perfect calmness and dignity to meet them. The decree of the Convention was read to the king, declaring him to be guilty of treason, that he was condemned to death, that the appeal to the people was refused, and that he was to be executed within twenty-four hours.

The king listened to the reading unmoved, took the paper from the hands of the secretary, folded it carefully, and placed it in his portfolio. Then turning to Garat, he handed him a paper, saying,

"Monsieur Minister of Justice, I request you to deliver this letter to the Convention."

Garat hesitated to take the paper, and the king immediately rejoined, "I will read it to you," and read, in a distinct, unfaltering voice, as follows:

> "I demand of the Convention a delay of three days, in order to prepare myself to appear before God. I require, farther, to see freely the priest whom I shall name to the commissaries of the Commune, and that he be protected in the act of charity which he shall exercise toward me. I demand to be freed from the perpetual surveillance which has been exercised toward me for so many days. I demand, during these last moments, leave to see my family, when I desire it, without witnesses. I desire most earnestly that the Convention will at once take into consideration the fate of my family, and that they be allowed immediately to retire unmolested whithersoever they shall see fit to choose an asylum. I recommend to the kindness of the nation all the persons attached to me. There are among them

many old men, and women, and children, who are entirely dependent upon me, and must be in want."

The delegation retired. The king, with a firm step, walked two or three times up and down his chamber, and then called for his dinner. He sat down and ate with his usual appetite; but his attendants refused to let him have either knife or fork, and he was furnished only with a spoon. This excited his indignation, and he said, warmly,

"Do they think that I am such a coward as to lay violent hands upon myself? I am innocent, and I shall die fearlessly."

Having finished his repast, he waited patiently for the return of the answer from the Convention. At six o'clock, Garat, accompanied by Santerre, entered again. The Convention refused the delay of execution which Louis XVI. had solicited, but granted the other demands.

In a few moments M. Edgeworth, the ecclesiastic who had been sent for, arrived. He entered the chamber, and, overwhelmed with emotion, fell at the monarch's feet and burst into tears. The king, deeply moved, also wept, and, as he raised M. Edgeworth, said,

"Pardon me this momentary weakness. I have lived so long among my enemies that habit has rendered me indifferent to their hatred, and my heart has been closed against all sentiments of tenderness; but the sight of a faithful friend restores to me my sensibility, which I believed dead, and moves me to tears in spite of myself."

The king conversed earnestly with his spiritual adviser respecting his will, which he read, and inquired earnestly for his friends, whose sufferings moved his heart deeply. The hour of seven had now arrived, when the king was to hold his last interview with his family. But even this could not be in private. He was to be watched by his jailers, who were to hear every word and witness every gesture. The door opened, and the queen, pallid and woe-stricken, entered, leading her son by the hand. She threw herself into the arms of her husband, and silently endeavored to draw him toward her chamber.

"No, no," whispered the king, clasping her to his heart; "I can see you only here."

Madame Elizabeth, with the king's daughter, followed. A scene of anguish ensued which neither pen nor pencil can portray. The king sat

down, with the queen upon his right hand, his sister upon his left, their arms encircling his neck, and their heads resting upon his breast. The dauphin sat upon his father's knee, with his arm around his neck. The beautiful princess, with disheveled hair, threw herself between her father's knees, and buried her face in his lap. More than half an hour passed during which not an articulate word was spoken; but cries, groans, and occasional shrieks of anguish, which pierced even the thick walls of the Temple and were heard in the streets, rose from the group.

For two hours the agonizing interview was continued. As they gradually regained some little composure, in low tones they whispered messages of tenderness and love, interrupted by sobs, and kisses, and blinding floods of tears. It was now after nine o'clock, and in the morning the king was to be led to the guillotine. The queen implored permission for them to remain with him through the night. The king, through tenderness for his family, declined, but promised to see them again at seven o'clock the next morning. As the king accompanied them to the staircase their cries were redoubled, and the princess fainted in utter unconsciousness at her father's feet. The queen, Madame Elizabeth, and Clery carried her to the stairs, and the king returned to the room, and, burying his face in his hands, sank, exhausted, into a chair. After a long silence he turned to M. Edgeworth and said,

"Ah! monsieur, what an interview I have had! Why do I love so fondly? Alas! why am I so fondly loved? But we have now done with time. Let us occupy ourselves with eternity."

LAST INTERVIEW BETWEEN LOUIS XVI. AND HIS FAMILY.

The king passed some time in religious conversation and prayer, and, having arranged with M. Edgeworth to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the earliest hours of the morning, at midnight threw himself upon his bed, and almost immediately fell into a calm and refreshing sleep.

The faithful Clery and M. Edgeworth watched at the bedside of the king. At five o'clock they woke him. "Has it struck five?" inquired the king. "Not yet by the clock of the tower," Clery replied; "but several of the clocks of the city have struck." "I have slept soundly," remarked the king. "I was much fatigued yesterday."

He immediately arose. An altar had been prepared in the middle of the room composed of a chest of drawers, and the king, after engaging earnestly in prayer, received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Then leading Clery into the recess of a window, he detached from his watch a seal, and took from his finger a wedding-ring, and handing them to Clery, said,

"After my death you will give this seal to my son, this ring to the queen. Tell her I resign it with pain that it may not be profaned with my

body. This small parcel contains locks of hair of all my family: that you will give her. Say to the queen, my dear children, and my sister, that I had promised to see them this morning, but that I desired to spare them the agony of such a bitter separation twice over. How much it has cost me to depart without receiving their last embraces!"

He could say no more, for sobs choked his utterance. Soon recovering himself, he called for scissors, and cut off his long hair, that he might escape the humiliation of having that done by the executioner.

A few beams of daylight began now to penetrate the gloomy prison through the grated windows, and the beating of drums, and the rumbling of the wheels of heavy artillery were heard in the streets. The king turned to his confessor, and said,

"How happy I am that I maintained my faith on the throne! Where should I be this day but for this hope? Yes, there is on high a Judge, incorruptible, who will award to me that measure of justice which men refuse to me here below."

Two hours passed away, while the king listened to the gathering of the troops in the court-yard and around the Temple. At nine o'clock a tumultuous noise was heard of men ascending the staircase. Santerre entered, with twelve municipal officers and ten gens d'armes. The king, with commanding voice and gesture, pointed Santerre to the door, and said,

"You have come for me. I will be with you in an instant. Await me there."

Falling upon his knees, he engaged a moment in prayer, and then, turning to M. Edgeworth, said,

"All is consummated. Give me your blessing, and pray to God to sustain me to the end."

He rose, and taking from the table a paper which contained his last will and testament, addressed one of the municipal guard, saying, "I beg of you to transmit this paper to the queen." The man, whose name was Jacques Roux, brutally replied, "I am here to conduct you to the scaffold, not to perform your commissions."

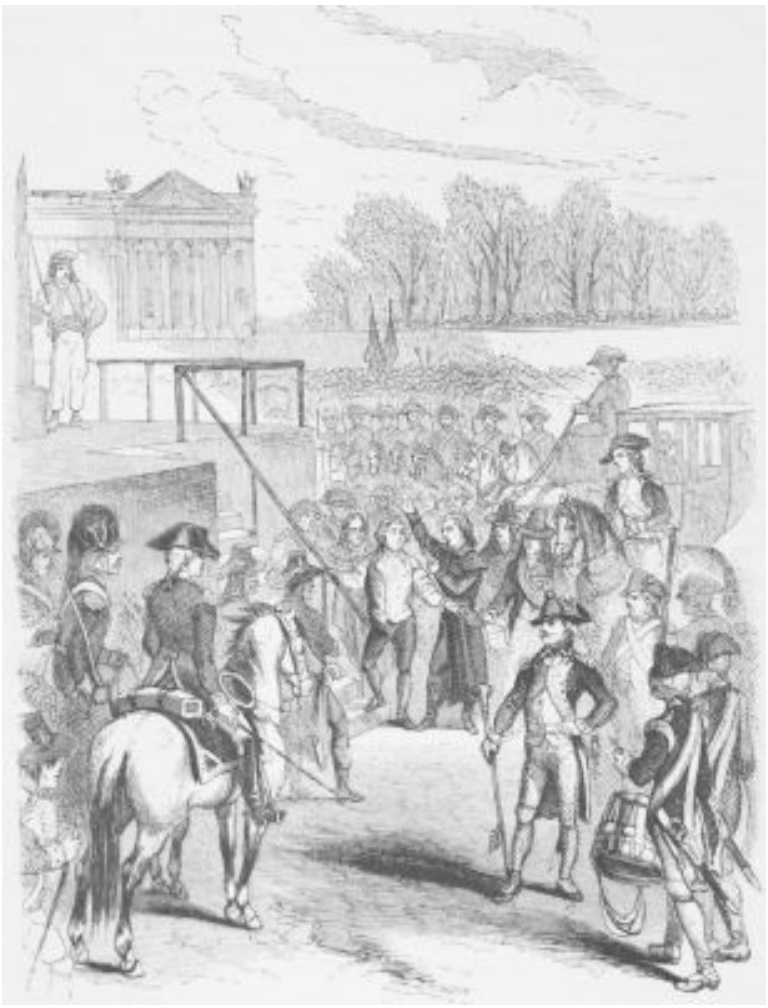
"True," said the king, in a saddened tone, but without the slightest appearance of irritation. Then carefully scanning the countenances of each member of the guard, he selected one whose features expressed humanity,

and solicited him to take charge of the paper. The man, whose name was Gobeau, took the paper.

The king, declining the cloak which Clery offered him, said, "Give me only my hat." Then, taking the hand of Clery, he pressed it affectionately in a final adieu, and, turning to Santerre, said, "Let us go." Descending the stairs with a firm tread, followed by the armed escort, he met a turnkey whom he had the evening before reproached for some impertinence. The king approached him and said, in tones of kindness,

"Mathey, I was somewhat warm with you yesterday; excuse me for the sake of this hour."

As he crossed the court-yard, he twice turned to look up at the windows of the queen's apartment in the tower, where those so dear to him were suffering the utmost anguish which human hearts can endure. Two gens d'armes sat upon the front seat of the carriage. The king and M. Edgeworth took the back seat. The morning was damp and chill, and gloomy clouds darkened the sky. Sixty drums were beating at the heads of the horses, and an army of troops, with all the most formidable enginery of war, preceded, surrounded, and followed the carriage. The noise of the drums prevented any conversation, and the king sat in silence in the carriage, evidently engaged in prayer. The procession moved so slowly along the Boulevards that it was two hours before they reached the Place de la Révolution. An immense crowd filled the place, above whom towered the lofty platform and blood-red posts of the guillotine.



EXECUTION OF LOUIS XVI.

As the carriage stopped the king whispered to M. Edgeworth, "We have arrived, if I mistake not." The drums ceased beating, and the whole multitude gazed in the most solemn silence. The two gens d'armes alighted. The king placed his hand upon the knee of the heroic ecclesiastic, M. Edgeworth, and said to the gens d'armes,

"Gentlemen, I recommend to your care this gentleman. Let him not be insulted after my death. I entreat you to watch over him."

"Yes, yes," said one, contemptuously; "make your mind easy, we will take care of him. Let us alone."

Louis alighted. Two of the executioners came to the foot of the scaffold to take off his coat. The king waved them away, and himself took off his coat and cravat, and turned down the collar of his shirt, that his

throat might be presented bare to the knife. They then came with cords to bind his hands behind his back.

"What do you wish to do?" said the king, indignantly.

"Bind you," they replied, as they seized his hands, and endeavored to fasten them with the cords.

"Bind me!" replied the king, in tones of deepest feeling. "No, no; I will never consent. Do your business, but you shall not bind me."

The executioners seized him rudely, and called for help. "Sire," said his Christian adviser, "suffer this outrage, as a last resemblance to that God who is about to be your reward."

"Assuredly," replied the king, "there needed nothing less than the example of God to make me submit to such an indignity." Then, holding out his hands to the executioners, he said, "Do as you will! I will drink the cup to the dregs."

With a firm tread he ascended the steep steps of the scaffold, looked for a moment upon the keen and polished edge of the axe, and then, turning to the vast throng, said, in a voice clear and untremulous,

"People, I die innocent of all the crimes imputed to me! I pardon the authors of my death, and pray to God that the blood you are about to shed may not fall again on France."

He would have continued, but the drums were ordered to beat, and his voice was immediately drowned. The executioners seized him, bound him to the plank, the slide fell, and the head of Louis XVI. dropped into the basket.

No one has had a better opportunity of ascertaining the true character of the king than President Jefferson. Speaking of some of the king's measures he said, "These concessions came from the very heart of the king. He had not a wish but for the good of the nation; and for that object no personal sacrifice would ever have cost him a moment's regret; but his mind was weakness itself, his constitution timid, his judgment null, and without sufficient firmness even to stand by the faith of his word. His queen, too, haughty and bearing no contradiction, had an absolute ascendency over him; and round her were rallied the king's brother, D'Artois, the court generally, and the aristocratic part of his ministers, particularly Breteuil, Broglio, Vauguyon, Foulon, Luzerne—men whose principles of government were those of the age of Louis XIV. Against this

host, the good counsels of Necker, Montmorin, St. Priest, although in unison with the wishes of the king himself, were of little avail. The resolutions of the morning, formed under their advice, would be reversed in the evening by the influence of the queen and the court."

The Royalists were exceedingly exasperated by the condemnation of the king. A noble, Lepelletier St. Fargeau, who had espoused the popular cause, voted for the king's death. The Royalists were peculiarly excited against him, in consequence of his rank and fortune. On the evening of the 20th of January, as Louis was being informed of his sentence, a life-guardsman of the king tracked Lepelletier into a restaurateur's in the Palais Royal, and, just as he was sitting down to the table, stepped up to him and said,

"Art thou Lepelletier, the villain who voted for the death of the king?"

"Yes," replied Lepelletier, "but I am not a villain. I voted according to my conscience."

"There, then," rejoined the life-guardsman, "take that for thy reward," and he plunged his sword to the hilt in his side. Lepelletier fell dead, and his assassin escaped before they had time to arrest him.

This event created intense excitement, and increased the conviction that the Royalists had conspired to rescue the king, by force of arms, at the foot of the scaffold.

ASSASSINATION OF LEPELLETIER DE ST. FARGEAU.

FOOTNOTES:

381. Hist. Parl., vol. xxi., p. 314.

382. Résumé du Rapport du Commissaire Albertier, Hist. Parl., vol. xxi., p. 319.

383. One of Napoleon's first acts upon becoming First Consul was to show his appreciation of the heroism of Tronchet by placing him at the head of the Court of Cassation. "Tronchet," he said, "was the soul of the civil code, as I was its demonstrator. He was gifted with a singularly profound and correct understanding, but he could not descend to developments. He spoke badly, and could not defend what he proposed."—*Napoleon at St. Helena*, p. 192.

384. Lacretelle.

385. Lamartine, History of the Girondists, vol. ii., p. 342.

386. "The crowd in the galleries received with murmurs all votes that were not for death, and they frequently addressed threatening gestures to the Assembly itself. The deputies replied to them from the interior of the hall, and hence resulted a tumultuous exchange of menaces and abusive epithets. This fearfully ominous scene had shaken all minds and changed many resolutions. Vergniaud, who had appeared deeply affected by the fate of Louis XVI., and who

had declared to his friends that he never could condemn that unfortunate prince, Vergniaud, on beholding this tumultuous scene, imagined that he saw civil war kindled in France, and pronounced sentence of death, with the addition, however, of Mailhe's amendment (which required that the execution should be delayed). On being questioned respecting his change of opinion, he replied that he thought he saw civil war on the point of breaking out, and that he durst not balance the life of an individual against the welfare of France."—*Thiers's History of the French Revolution*, vol. ii., p. 68.

387. "Robespierre was by no means the worst character who figured in the Revolution. He opposed trying the queen. He was not an atheist; on the contrary, he had publicly maintained the existence of a Supreme Being, in opposition to many of his colleagues. Neither was he of opinion that it was necessary to exterminate all priests and nobles, like many others. Robespierre wanted to proclaim the king an outlaw, and not to go through the ridiculous mockery of trying him. Robespierre was a fanatic, a monster; but he was incorruptible, and incapable of robbing or of causing the deaths of others, either from personal enmity or a desire of enriching himself. He was an enthusiast, but one who really believed that he was acting right, and died not worth a sou. In some respects Robespierre may be said to have been an honest man."—*Napoleon at St. Helena*, p. 590.

388. "Of those who judged the king many thought him willfully criminal; many that his existence would keep the nation in perpetual conflict with the horde of kings who would war against a generation which might come home to themselves, and that it were better that one should die than all. I should not have voted with this portion of the Legislature. I should have shut up the queen in a convent, putting harm out of her power, and placed the king in his station, investing him with limited powers, which I verily believe he would honestly have exercised, according to the measure of his understanding."—*Thomas Jefferson, Life by Randall*, vol. i., p. 533. There were obviously insuperable objections to the plan thus suggested by Mr. Jefferson.

Chapter XXXII.
The Reign of Terror

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Charges against the Girondists.—Danton.—The French Embassador ordered to leave England.—War declared against England.—Navy of England.—Internal War.—Plot to assassinate the Girondists.—Bold Words of Vergniaud.—Insurrection in La Vendée.—Conflict between Dumouriez and the Assembly.—Flight of Dumouriez.—The Mob aroused and the Girondists arrested.—Charlotte Corday.—France rises *en masse* to repel the Allies.—The treasonable Surrender of Toulon.

The execution of the king roused all Europe against republican France. The Jacobins had gained a decisive victory over the Girondists, and succeeded in turning popular hatred against them by accusing them of being enemies of the people, because they opposed the excesses of the mob; of being the friends of royalty, because they had wished to save the life of the king; and of being hostile to the republic, because they advocated measures of moderation.[389]

Danton was now the acknowledged leader of the Jacobins. He had obtained the entire control of the mob of Paris, and could guide their terrible and resistless energies in any direction. With this potent weapon in his hand he was omnipotent, and his political adversaries were at his mercy. The Reign of Terror had now commenced. The Girondists made a heroic attempt to bring to justice the assassins of September, but the Jacobins promptly stopped the proceedings.

The aristocracy of birth was now effectually crushed, and the Jacobins commenced a warfare against the aristocracy of wealth and character. An elegant mansion, garments of fine cloth, and even polished manners, exposed one to the charge of being an aristocrat, and turned against him

the insults of the rabble. Marat was particularly fierce, in his journal, against the aristocracy of the burghers, merchants, and statesmen.

Upon the arrival of the courier in London conveying intelligence of the execution of the king, M. Chauvelin, the French embassador, was ordered to leave England within twenty-four hours.

"After events," said Pitt, "on which the imagination can only dwell with horror, and since an infernal faction has seized on the supreme power in France, we could no longer tolerate the presence of M. Chauvelin, who has left no means untried to induce the people to rise against the government and the laws of this country."

The National Convention at once declared war against England.[390] Pitt, with almost superhuman energy, mustered the forces of England and Europe for the strife. In less than six months England had entered into a treaty of alliance with Russia, Prussia, Austria, Naples, Spain, and Portugal, for the prosecution of the war; and had also entered into treaties by which she promised large subsidies to Hesse Cassel, Sardinia, and Baden. England thus became the soul of this coalition, which combined the whole of Europe, with the exception of Venice, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, and Turkey, against France. These combined armies were to assail the Republic by land, while the invincible fleet of England was to hurl a storm of shot and shells into all her maritime towns.

France, at this time, had but one hundred and fifty-nine vessels of war all told. England had four hundred and fifteen, and her ally, Holland, one hundred. Most of these were large ships, heavily armed; and, consequently, England had but little fear that any French armies could reach her isles.[391] Parliament voted an extraordinary supply of £3,200,000 ($16,000,000). One hundred and thirty-one thousand Austrians, one hundred and twelve thousand Prussians, and fifty thousand Spaniards were speedily on the march to assail France at every point on the frontier.[392]

The Royalists in La Vendée rose in arms against the Republic, and unfurled the white banner of the Bourbons. France was now threatened more fearfully than ever before with external and internal war. The Convention, controlled by the Jacobins and appalled by the danger, decreed a levy of three hundred thousand men to repel the assailants, and also organized an extraordinary revolutionary tribunal, invested with

unlimited powers to arrest, judge, and punish any whom they should deem dangerous to the Republic. Violence filled the land, terror reigned every where, and even Robespierre was heard to exclaim, "I am sick of the Revolution."

Dumouriez had driven the Austrians out of Belgium and the Netherlands, and was at the head of an army of about seventy-five thousand men. Disgusted with the anarchy which reigned in France, he formed the bold design of marching upon Paris with his army, dispersing the Convention, abolishing the Republic, reinstituting a constitutional monarchy by establishing the Constitution of 1791, and by placing a king, probably the son of the Duke of Orleans, subsequently Louis Philippe, upon the throne. The Jacobins, goaded by these accumulating dangers—all Europe assailing France from without, and Royalists plotting within—were prepared for any measures of desperation. The Girondists, with unavailing heroism, opposed the frantic measures of popular violence, and the Jacobins resolved to get rid of them all by a decisive blow. The assassins of September were ready to ply the dagger, under the plea that murder was patriotism. A plan was formed to strike them all down, in the Convention, on the night of the 10th of March. But the Girondists, informed of the plot, absented themselves from the meeting and the enterprise failed. The bold spirit of the Girondists was avowed in the words of Vergniaud:

> "We have witnessed," said he, "the development of that strange system of liberty in which we are told 'You are free, but think with us, or we will denounce you to the vengeance of the people; you are free, but bow down your head to the idol we worship, or we will denounce you to the vengeance of the people; you are free, but join us in persecuting the men whose probity and intelligence we dread, or we will denounce you to the vengeance of the people.' Citizens! we have reason to fear that the Revolution, like Saturn, will devour successively all its children, and only engender despotism and the calamities which accompany it."

The Province of La Vendée contained a population of about three hundred thousand. It was a rural district where there was no middle class. The priests and the nobles had the unlettered peasantry entirely under their influence. Three armies were raised here against the Republic, of about twelve thousand each. Royalists from various parts of the empire flocked to this region, and emigrants were landed upon the coast to join the insurgents. For three years a most cruel and bloody war was here waged between the Royalists and the Republicans.

The intelligence of this formidable insurrection increased the panic of the Convention. A law was passed disarming all who had belonged to the privileged class, and declaring those to be outlaws who should be found in any hostile gathering against the Republic. The emigrants were forbidden to land in France under the penalty of death. Every house in the kingdom was to inscribe upon its door the names of all its inmates, and was to be open at all times to the visits of the Vigilance Committee.

Dumouriez sullied his character by surrendering to the Austrians several fortresses, and agreeing with them that he would march upon Paris and restore a monarchical government to France. The Austrians trusted that he would place upon the throne the young son of Louis XVI., though it was doubtless his intention to place there the young Duke of Chartres (Louis Philippe), who would be the representative of popular ideas.

The Jacobin Club sent a deputation of three of its members to the camp, to sound the views of Dumouriez. The general received them with courtesy, but said, with military frankness,

"The Convention is an assembly of tyrants. While I have three inches of steel by my side that monster shall not exist. As for the Republic, it is an idle word. I had faith in it for three days. There is only one way to save the country; that is, to re-establish the Constitution of 1791 and a king."

"Can you think of it!" one of the deputation exclaimed; "the French view royalty with horror. The very name of Louis is an abomination."

"What does it signify," replied Dumouriez, "whether the king be called Louis, or Jacques, or Philippe?"

"And what are your means to effect this revolution?" they inquired.

"My army," Dumouriez proudly replied. "From my camp or from the stronghold of some fortress they will express their resolve for a king."

"But your plan will peril the lives of the rest of the royal family in the Temple."

"If every member of that family in France or at Coblentz should perish," Dumouriez replied, "I can still find a chief. And if any farther barbarities are practiced upon the Bourbons in the Temple I will surround Paris with my army and starve the Parisians into subjection."

The deputation returned to Paris with their report, and four commissioners were immediately dispatched, accompanied by the Minister of War, to summon Dumouriez to the bar of the Convention. Dumouriez promptly arrested the commissioners and sent them off to the Austrians, to be retained by them as hostages.

DUMOURIEZ ARRESTING THE ENVOYS.

The Convention immediately offered a reward for the head of Dumouriez, raised an army of forty thousand men to defend Paris, and arrested all the relatives of the officers under Dumouriez as hostages.

Dumouriez now found that he had not a moment to lose. Perils were accumulating thick around him. There were many indications that it might be difficult to carry the army over to his views. On the 4th of April, as he was repairing to a place of rendezvous with the Austrian leaders, the Prince of Coburg and General Mack, a battalion of soldiers, suspecting treachery, endeavored to stop him. He put spurs to his horse and distanced pursuit, while a storm of bullets whistled around his head. He succeeded,

after innumerable perils, in the circuitous ride of a whole day, in reaching the head-quarters of the Austrians. They received him with great distinction, and offered him the command of a division of their army. After two days' reflection, he said that it was with the soldiers of France he had hoped to restore a stable government to his country, accepting the Austrians only as auxiliaries; but that as a Frenchman he could not march against France at the head of foreigners. He retired to Switzerland. The Duke of Chartres (Louis Philippe), in friendlessness and poverty, followed him, and for some time was obliged to obtain a support by teaching school.

The Jacobins now accused their formidable rivals, the Girondists, of being implicated in the conspiracy of Dumouriez. Robespierre, in a speech of the most concentrated and potent malignity, urged that France had relieved herself of the aristocracy of birth, but that there was another aristocracy, that of wealth, equally to be dreaded, which must be crushed, and that the Girondists were the leaders of this aristocracy. This was most effectually pandering to the passions of the mob, and directing their fury against the Girondists. The Girondists were now in a state of terrible alarm. They knew the malignity of their foes, and could see but little hope for escape. They had overturned the throne of despotism, hoping to establish constitutional liberty: they had only introduced Jacobin phrensy and anarchy. Immense crowds of armed men paraded the streets of Paris, surrounded the Convention, and demanded vengeance against the leaders of the Gironde.[393]

The moderate Republicans, enemies of these acts of violence, striving to stem the torrent, endeavored to carry an act of accusation against Marat. He was charged with having encouraged assassination and carnage, of dissolving the National Convention, and of having established a power destructive of liberty.

Marat replied to the accusation by summoning the mob to his aid. They assembled in vast, tumultuous throngs, and the tribunal, overawed, after the trial of a few moments, unanimously acquitted him. This was the 24th of April. The mob accompanied him back to his seat in the Convention. He was borne in triumph into the hall in the arms of his confederates, his brow encircled by a wreath of victory.

"Citizen President," shouted one of the burly men who bore Marat, "we bring you the worthy Marat. Marat has always been the friend of the people, and the people will always be the friends of Marat. If Marat's head must fall, our heads must fall first."

As he uttered these words he brandished a battle-axe defiantly, and the mob in the aisles and crowded galleries vehemently applauded. He then demanded permission for the escort to file through the hall. The president, appalled by the hideous spectacle, had not time to give his consent before the whole throng, men, women, and boys, in rags and filth, rushed pell-mell into the hall, took the seats of the vacant members, and filled the room with indescribable tumult and uproar, shouting hosannas to Marat. The successful demagogue could not but boast of his triumph. Ascending the tribune, he said,

"Citizens! indignant at seeing a villainous faction betraying the Republic, I endeavored to unmask it and to *put the rope about its neck*. It resisted me by launching against me a decree of accusation. I have come off victorious. The faction is humbled, but not crushed. Waste not your time in decreeing triumphs. Defend yourselves with enthusiasm."

MARAT'S TRIUMPH.

Robespierre now demanded an act of accusation against the Girondists. Resistance was hopeless. The inundation of popular fury was at its flood, sweeping every thing before it. The most frightful scenes of tumult took place in the Convention, members endeavoring by violence to pull each other from the tribune.[394]

The whole Convention was now in a state of dismay, eighty thousand infuriate men surrounding it with artillery and musketry, declaring that the Convention should not leave its hall until the Girondists were arrested. The Convention, in a body, attempted to leave and force its way through the crowd, but it was ignominiously driven back. Under these circumstances it was voted that the leaders of the Girondists, twenty-two in number, should be put under arrest. This was the 2d of June, 1793.[395]

The Jacobins, having thus got rid of their enemies, and having the entire control, immediately decided to adopt a new Constitution, still more democratic in its character; and a committee was appointed to present one within a week. But the same division which existed in the Convention between the Jacobins and the Girondists existed all over France. In many of the departments fierce battles rose between the two parties.

In the mean time the Allies were pressing France in all directions. The Austrians and Prussians were advancing upon the north; the Piedmontese threading the passes of the maritime Alps; the Spaniards were prepared to rush from the defiles of the Pyrenees, and the fleet of England threatened every where the coast of France on the Mediterranean and the Channel.[396]

With amazing energy the Convention aroused itself to meet these perils. A new Constitution, exceedingly democratic, was framed and adopted. Every Frenchman twenty-one years of age was a voter. Fifty thousand souls were entitled to a deputy. There was but a single Assembly. Its decrees were immediately carried into execution.[397]

Danton, Robespierre, and Marat were now the idols of the mob of Paris and the real sovereigns of France. All who ventured opposition to them were proscribed and imprisoned. Members of the Republican or Girondist party every where, all over France, were arrested, or, where they were sufficiently numerous to resist, civil war raged.

At Caen there was a very beautiful girl, Charlotte Corday, twenty-five years of age, highly educated and accomplished. She was of spotless purity of character, and, with the enthusiasm of Madame Roland, she had espoused the cause of popular constitutional liberty. The principles of the Girondist party she had embraced, and the noble leaders of that party she regarded almost with adoration.

When she heard of the overthrow of the Girondists and their imprisonment, she resolved to avenge them, and hoped that, by striking down the leader of the Jacobins, she might rouse the Girondists scattered over France to rally and rescue liberty and their country. It was a three days' ride in the diligence from Caen to Paris. Arriving at Paris on Thursday the 11th of July, she carefully inspected the state of affairs, that she might select her victim, but confided her design to no one.

Marat appeared to her the most active, formidable, and insatiable in his proscription. She wrote him a note as follows:

> "Citizen: I have just arrived from Caen. Your love for your country inclines me to suppose you will listen with pleasure to the secret events of that part of the Republic. I will present myself at your house. Have the goodness to give orders for my admission, and grant me a moment's private conversation. I can point out the means by which you can render an important service to France."

She dispatched this note from her hotel, the Inn de la Providence in the Rue des Vieux Augustins, went to the Palais Royal and purchased a large sheath knife, and, taking a hackney-coach, drove to the residence of Marat, No. 44 Rue de l'Ecole de Médecine. It was Saturday night. Marat was taking a bath and reading by a light which stood upon a three-footed stool. He heard the rap of Charlotte, and called aloud to the woman who, as servant and mistress, attended him, and requested that she might be admitted.

Marat was a man of the most restless activity. Eagerly he inquired respecting the proscribed at Caen and of others who were opposed to Jacobin rule. Charlotte, while replying coolly, measured with her eye the spot she should strike with the knife. As she mentioned some names, he eagerly seized a pencil and began to write them down, saying,

"They shall all go to the guillotine."

"To the guillotine?" exclaimed Charlotte, and, instantly drawing the knife from her bosom, plunged it to the handle directly in his heart.

The miserable man uttered one frantic shriek of "Help!" and fell back dead into the water. The paramour of Marat and a serving-man rushed in, knocked Charlotte down with a chair, and trampled upon her. A crowd soon assembled. Without the slightest perturbation she avowed the deed. Her youth and beauty alone saved her from being torn in pieces. Soldiers soon arrived and conveyed her to prison.

"The way to avenge Marat," exclaimed Robespierre from the tribune in tones which caused France to tremble, "is to strike down his enemies without mercy."

The remains of the wretched man, whom all the world now execrates, were buried with the highest possible honors. His funeral at midnight, as all Paris seemed to follow him to his grave in a torch-light procession, was one of the most imposing scenes of the Revolution.

On Wednesday morning Charlotte was led to the Revolutionary Tribunal in the Palace of Justice. She appeared there dignified, calm, and beautiful. The indictment was read, and they were beginning to introduce their witnesses, when Charlotte said,

"These delays are needless. It is I that killed Marat."

There was a moment's pause, and many deplored the doom of one so youthful and lovely. At last the president inquired, "By whose instigation?"

"By that of no one," was the laconic reply.

"What tempted you?" inquired the president.

"His crimes," Charlotte answered; and then, continuing in tones of firmness and intensity which silenced and overawed all present, she said,

"I killed one man, to save a hundred thousand; a villain, to save the innocent; a savage wild beast, to give repose to my country. I was a Republican before the Revolution. I never wanted energy."[398]

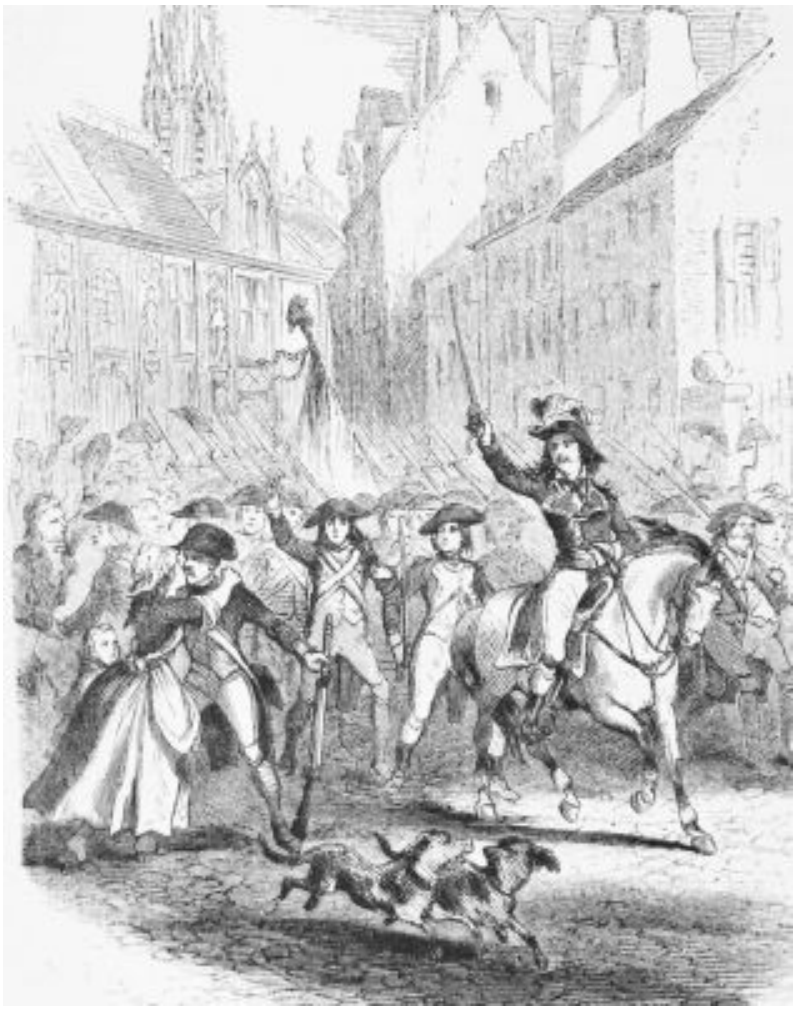
She listened to her doom of immediate death with a smile, and was conducted back to the prison, to be led from thence to the guillotine. A little after seven o'clock on this same evening a cart issued from the Conciergerie, bearing Charlotte, in the red robe of a murderess, to the guillotine. A vast throng crowded the streets, most of whom assailed her with howls and execrations. She looked upon them with a serene smile, as if she were riding on an excursion of pleasure. She was bound to the plank. The glittering axe glided through the grove, and the executioner, lifting her severed head, exhibited it to the people, and then brutally struck the cheek.

Robespierre and Danton, the idols of the mob, now divided the supreme power between them. The organization of a revolutionary government was simply the machine by means of which they operated.

On the 10th of August there was another magnificent festival in Paris to commemorate the adoption of the Jacobin Constitution. The celebrated painter David arranged the fête with great artistic skill, and again all Paris, though on the verge of ruin, was in a blaze of illumination and in a roar of triumph. The Austrian armies were now within fifteen days' march of Paris, and there was no organized force which could effectually arrest their progress. But the fear of the old Bourbon despotism rallied the masses to maintain, in preference, even the horrors of Jacobin ferocity. The aristocrats crushed the *people*; the Jacobins crushed the *aristocrats*. The populace naturally preferred the latter rule.

And now France rose, as a nation never rose before. At the motion of Danton it was decreed on the 23rd of August,

"From this moment until when the enemy shall be driven from the territory of the French Republic, *all the French* shall be in permanent requisition for the service of the armies. The young men shall go forth to fight. The married men shall forge the arms and transport the supplies. The women shall make tents and clothes, and attend on the hospitals. The children shall make lint out of rags; the old men shall cause themselves to be carried to the public places, to excite the courage of the warriors, to preach hatred of kings and love of the Republic."

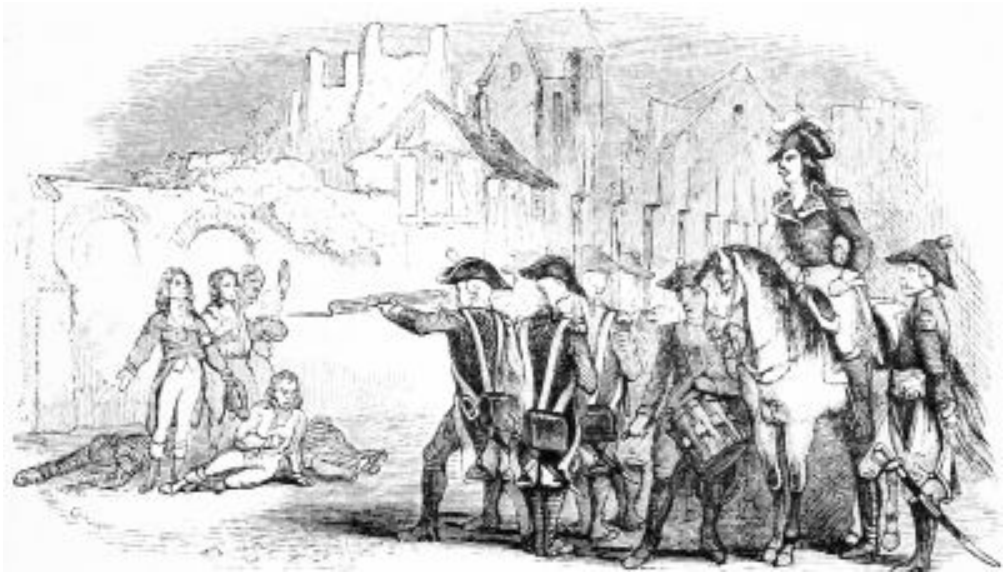


MARCH OF VOLUNTEERS.

All unmarried men or widowers without children, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, were to assemble at appointed rendezvous and march immediately. This act raised an army of one million two hundred thousand men. The men between twenty-five and thirty were to hold themselves in readiness to follow. And those between thirty and sixty were to be prepared to obey orders whenever they should be summoned to the field. There is sublimity, at least, in such energy.

All France was instantly converted into a camp, resounding with preparations for war. In La Vendée the friends of the Bourbons had rallied. The Convention decreed its utter destruction, the death of every man, conflagration of the dwellings, destruction of the crops, and the removal of the women and children to some other province, where they should be supported at the expense of the government. It was sternly resolved that no

mercy whatever should be shown to Frenchmen who were co-operating with foreigners to rivet anew upon France the chains of Bourbon despotism. These decrees were executed with merciless fidelity. The illustrious Carnot, who, to use his own words, "had the ambition of the three hundred Spartans, going to defend Thermopylæ," organized and disciplined fourteen armies, and selected for them able leaders.



EXECUTION IN LA VENDÉE.

While matters were in this condition, the inhabitants of Marseilles, Lyons, and Toulon rose, overpowered the Jacobins, and, raising the banner of the Bourbons, invited the approach of the Allies. Toulon was the naval arsenal of France, a large French fleet crowded its port, and its warehouses were filled with naval stores. Lord Hood, with an English squadron, was cruising off the coast. The Royalists, Admiral Troyoff at their head, gave the signal to the English, and basely surrendered to them the forts, shipping, and stores. It was a fearful loss to the Revolutionists. Lord Hood, the British admiral, immediately entered with his fleet, took possession, and issued a proclamation in which he said,

"Considering that the sections of Toulon have, by the commissioners whom they have sent to me, made a solemn declaration in favor of Louis XVII. and a monarchical government, and that they will use their utmost efforts to break the chains which fetter their country, and re-establish the Constitution as it was accepted by their defunct sovereign in 1789, I repeat

by this present declaration that I take possession of Toulon, and shall keep it solely as a deposit for Louis XVII., and that only till peace is re-established in France."[399]

An army of sixty thousand men was sent against rebellious Lyons. The city, after a prolonged siege and the endurance of innumerable woes, was captured. The Convention decreed that it should be utterly destroyed, and that over its ruins should be reared a monument with the inscription, "*Lyons made war upon Liberty: Lyons is no more!*" The cruelties inflicted upon the Royalists of this unhappy city are too painful to contemplate. The imagination can hardly exaggerate them. Fouché and Collot d'Herbois, the prominent agents in this bloody vengeance, were atheists. In contempt of Christianity, they ordered the Bible and the Cross to be borne through the streets on an ass; the ass was compelled to drink of the consecrated wine from the communion-cup. Six thousand of the citizens of Lyons perished in these sanguinary persecutions, and twelve thousand were driven into exile. The Revolutionary Tribunal was active night and day condemning to death. One morning a young girl rushed into the hall, exclaiming,

"There remain to me, of all our family, only my brothers. Mother, father, sisters, uncles—you have butchered all. And now you are going to condemn my brothers. In mercy ordain that I may ascend the scaffold with them."

Her prayer of anguish was refused, and the poor child threw herself into the Rhone.

The Royalist insurrection in La Vendée, after a long and terrible conflict, was crushed out. No language can describe the horrors of vengeance which ensued. The tale of brutality is too awful to be told. Demons could not have been more infernal in mercilessness.

"Death by fire and the sword," writes Lamartine, "made a noise, scattered blood, and left bodies to be buried and be counted. The silent waters of the Loire were dumb and would render no account. The bottom of the sea alone would know the number of the victims. Carrier caused mariners to be brought as pitiless as himself. He ordered them, without much mystery, to pierce plug-holes in a certain number of decked vessels, so as to sink them with their living cargoes in parts of the river.

"These orders were first executed secretly and under the color of accidents of navigation. But soon these naval executions, of which the waves of the Loire bore witness even to its mouth, became a spectacle for Carrier and for his courtiers. He furnished a galley of pleasure, of which he made a present to his accomplice Lambertye, under pretext of watching the banks of the river. This vessel, adorned with all the delicacies of furniture, provided with all the wines and all the necessaries of feasting, became the most general theatre of these executions. Carrier embarked therein sometimes himself, with his executioners and his courtesans, to make trips upon the water. While he yielded himself up to the joys of love and wine on deck, his victims, inclosed in the hold, saw, at a given signal, the valves open, and the waves of the Loire swallow them up. A stifled groaning announced to the crew that hundreds of lives had just breathed their last under their feet. They continued their orgies upon this floating sepulchre.

MASSACRES IN LYONS.

"Sometimes Carrier, Lambertye, and their accomplices rejoiced in the cruel pleasure of this spectacle of agony. They caused victims of either sex, in couples, to mount upon the deck. Stripped of their garments, they bound them face to face, one to the other—a priest with a nun, a young man with a young girl. They suspended them, thus naked and interlaced, by a cord passed under the shoulders through a block of the vessel. They sported with horrible sarcasms on this parody of marriage in death, and then flung the victims into the river. This cannibal sport was termed 'Republican Marriages.'"

DROWNING VICTIMS IN THE LOIRE.

Robespierre, informed of these demoniac deeds, recalled Carrier, but he did not dare to bring an act of accusation against the wretch, lest he should peril his own head by being charged with sympathy with the Royalists. It is grateful to record that Carrier himself was eventually conducted, amid the execrations of the community, to the scaffold.[400]

The prisons of Paris were now filled with victims. Municipal instructions, issued by Chaumette, catalogued as follows those who should be arrested as suspected persons: 1. Those who, by crafty addresses, check the energy of the people. 2. Those who mysteriously deplore the lot of the people, and propagate bad news with affected grief. 3. Those who, silent respecting the faults of the Royalists, declaim against the faults of the Patriots. 4. Those who pity those against whom the law is obliged to take measures. 5. Those who associate with aristocrats, priests, and moderates, and take an interest in their fate. 6. Those who have not taken an active part in the Revolution. 7. Those who have received the Constitution with indifference and have expressed fears respecting its duration. 8. Those

who, though they have done nothing against liberty, have done nothing for it. 9. Those who do not attend the sections. 10. Those who speak contemptuously of the constituted authorities. 11. Those who have signed counter-revolutionary petitions. 12. The partisans of La Fayette, and those who marched to the charge in the Champ de Mars.

There were but few persons in Paris who were not liable to be arrested, by the machinations of any enemy, upon some one of these charges. Many thousands were soon incarcerated. The prisons of the Maire, La Force, the Conciergerie, the Abbaye, St. Pelagie, and the Madelonettes were crowded to their utmost capacity. Then large private mansions, the College of Duplessis, and finally the spacious Palace of the Luxembourg were converted into prisons, and were filled to suffocation with the suspected. In these abodes, surrendered to filth and misery, with nothing but straw to lie upon, the most brilliant men and women of Paris were huddled together with the vilest outcasts. After a time, however, those who had property were permitted to surround themselves with such comforts as their means would command. From these various prisons those who were to be tried before the Revolutionary Tribunal were taken to the Conciergerie, which adjoined the Palace of Justice, where the tribunal held its session. A trial was almost certain condemnation, and the guillotine knew no rest. Miserable France was now surrendered to the Reign of Terror. The mob had become the sovereign.

FOOTNOTES:

389. Mignet, p. 192.

390. "The Convention, finding England already leagued with the coalition, and consequently all its promises of neutrality vain and illusive, on the 1st of February, 1793, declared war against the King of Great Britain and the Stadtholder of Holland, who had been entirely guided by the cabinet of St. James's since 1788."—*Mignet*, vol. i., p. 195.

391. Lamartine, History of the Girondists, vol. ii., p. 395.

392. "It was in Spain, more particularly, that Pitt set intrigues at work to urge her to the greatest blunder she ever committed—that of joining England against France, her only maritime ally."—*Thiers*, vol. ii., p. 82.

393. In reference to the terrific conflict between the privileged classes and the enslaved people, Prof. Smyth writes, "My conclusion is that neither the high party nor the low have the slightest right to felicitate themselves on their conduct during this memorable revolution. No historian,

no commentator on these times can proceed a moment, but on the supposition that, while he is censuring the faults of the one, he is perfectly aware of the antagonistic faults of the other; that each party is to take its turn; and that the whole is a dreadful lesson of instruction both to the one and the other. *I have dwelt with more earnestness on the faults of the popular leaders, because their faults are more natural and more important; because the friends of freedom (hot and opinionated though they be) are still more within the reach of instruction than are men of arbitrary temperament, than courts and privileged orders, who are systematically otherwise.*"—*Prof Smyth, Fr. Rev.*, vol. iii., p. 245.

The story of the French Revolution has too often been told in this spirit, veiling the atrocities of the oppressors and magnifying the inhumanity of the oppressed. While truth demands that all the violence of an enslaved people, in despair bursting their bonds, should be faithfully delineated, truth no less imperiously demands that the mercilessness of proud oppressors, crushing millions for ages, and goading a whole nation to the madness of despair, should be also impartially described.

394. In the Convention, each one who addressed the body ascended to a desk on the platform, called the tribune.

395. Thiers, vol. ii., p. 194.

396. The Allies acted without union, and, under disguise of a holy war, concealed the most selfish views. The Austrians wanted Valenciennes; the King of Prussia, Mayence; the English, Dunkirk; the Piedmontese aspired to recover Chambéry and Nice; the Spaniards, the least interested of all, had nevertheless some thoughts of Roussillon.—*Thiers*, vol. ii., p. 217.

397. "As the Constitution thus made over the government to the multitude, as it placed the power in a disorganized body, it would have been at all times impracticable, but at a period of general warfare it was peculiarly so. Accordingly, it was no sooner made than suspended."—*Mignet.*

398. Procès de Charlotte Corday (Hist. Parl., vol. xxviii., p. 311, 338).

399. After the death of Louis XVI. the Royalists considered the young Dauphin, then imprisoned in the tower, as the legitimate king, with the title of Louis XVII.

400. Carrier was heard to say one day, while breakfasting in a restaurant, that France was too densely populated for a republic, and that it was necessary to kill off at least one third of the inhabitants before they could have a good government. It is estimated that fifteen thousand were massacred in La Vendée at his command.

Chapter XXXIII.
Execution of Marie Antoinette and Madame Elizabeth

Table of Contents

Marie Antoinette in the Temple.—Conspiracies for the Rescue of the Royal Family.—The young Dauphin torn from his Mother.—Phrensy of the Queen.—She is removed to the Conciergerie.—Indignities and Woes.—The Queen led to Trial.—Letter to her Sister.—The Execution of the Queen.—Madame Elizabeth led to Trial and Execution.—Fate of the Princess and the Dauphin.

The populace now demanded the head of Marie Antoinette, whom they had long been taught implacably to hate.[401] We left her on the 21st of January in the Temple, overwhelmed with agony. Swoon succeeded swoon as she listened to the clamor in the streets which accompanied her husband to the guillotine. The rumbling of the cannon, on their return, and the shouts of *Vive la République* beneath her windows announced that the tragedy was terminated. The Commune cruelly refused to allow her any details of the last hours of the king, and even Clery, his faithful servant, was imprisoned, so that he could not even place in her hands the lock of hair and the marriage ring which the king had intrusted to him.

Many conspiracies were formed for the rescue of the royal family, which led to a constant increase of the rigors of their captivity. The queen refused to resume her walks in the garden as she could not endure to pass the door of the king's apartment. But, after long seclusion, for the sake of the health of her children she consented to walk with them each day, for a few moments, on the platform of the tower. The Commune immediately ordered the platform to be surrounded with high boards, so that the captives might not receive any tokens of recognition from their friends.

For four months Marie Antoinette, Madame Elizabeth, and the children had the consolation of condoling with each other in their misery.

But on the night of the 4th of July the clatter of an armed band was heard ascending the tower, and some commissioners tumultuously entered her chamber. They read to her a decree announcing that her son, the dauphin, was to be taken from her and imprisoned by himself. The poor child, as he listened to the reading of this cruel edict, was frantic with terror. He threw himself into his mother's arms and shrieked out,

"Oh! mother, mother, do not abandon me to those men. They will kill me as they did papa."

The queen, in a delirium of agony, grasped her child and placing him upon the bed behind her, with eyes glaring like a tigress, bade defiance to the officers, declaring that they should tear her in pieces before they should take her boy. Even the officers were overcome by her heart-rending grief, and for two hours refrained from taking the child by violence. The exhausted mother at length fell in a swoon, and the child was taken, shrieking with terror, from the room. She never saw her son again.

A few weeks of woe passed slowly away, when, early in August, she was awakened from her sleep just after midnight by a band of armed men who came to convey her to the prison of the Conciergerie, where she was to await her trial. The queen had already drained the cup of misery to the dregs, and nothing could add to her woe. She rose, in the stupor of despair, and began to dress herself in the presence of the officers. Her daughter and Madame Elizabeth threw themselves at the feet of the men, and implored them not to take the queen from them. They might as well have plead with the granite blocks of their prison.

Pressing her daughter for a moment convulsively to her heart, she covered her with kisses, spoke a few words of impassioned tenderness to her sister, and then, as if fearing to cast a last look upon these objects of her affection, hurried from the room. In leaving she struck her forehead against the beam of the low door.

"Did you hurt yourself?" inquired one of the men.

"Oh no!" was her reply, "nothing now can farther harm me."

A carriage was waiting for her at the door. Escorted by *gens d'armes* she was conducted, through the gloom of midnight, to the dungeon where she was to await her condemnation.

MARIE ANTOINETTE IN THE CONCIERGERIE.

The world-renowned prison of the Conciergerie consists of a series of subterranean dungeons beneath the floor of the *Palais de Justice*. More gloomy tombs the imagination can hardly conceive. Down the dripping and slimy steps the queen was led, by the light of a tallow candle, until, through a labyrinth of corridors, she approached the iron door of her dungeon. The rusty hinges grated as the door was opened, and she was thrust in. Two soldiers accompanied her, with drawn swords, and who were commanded, in defiance of all the instincts of delicacy, not to allow her to be one moment absent from their sight. The one candle gave just light enough to reveal the horrors of her cell. The floor was covered with mud, and streams of water trickled down the stone walls. A miserable pallet, with a dirty covering of coarse and tattered cloth, a small pine table, and a chair constituted the only furniture. So deep was the fall from the saloons of Versailles.

Here the queen remained for two months, her misery being slightly alleviated by the kind-heartedness of Madame Richard, the wife of the

jailer, who did every thing the rigorous rules would admit to mitigate her woes. With her own hand she prepared food for the queen, obtained for her a few articles of furniture, and communicated to her daily such intelligence as she could obtain of her sister and her children. The friends of the queen were untiring in their endeavors, by some conspiracy, to effect her release. A gentleman obtained admittance to the queen's cell, and presented her with a rose, containing a note hidden among its petals. One of the *gens d'armes* detected the attempt; and the jailer and his wife, for their suspected connivance, were both arrested and thrown into the dungeons.

Other jailers were provided for the prison, M. and Madame Bault; but they also had humane hearts, and wept over the woes of Marie Antoinette. The queen's wardrobe consisted only of two robes, one white, one black, and three chemises. From the humidity of her cell these rapidly decayed, with her shoes and stockings, and fell into tatters. Madame Bault was permitted to assist the queen in mending these, but was not allowed to furnish any new apparel. Books and writing materials were also prohibited. With the point of her needle she kept a brief memorandum of events on the stucco of her walls, and also inscribed brief lines of poetry and sentences from Scripture.

On the 14th of October the queen was conducted from her dungeon to the halls above for trial. Surrounded by a strong escort, she was led to the bench of the accused. Her accusation was that she abhorred the Revolution which had beheaded her husband and plunged her whole family into unutterable woe.

The queen was dressed in the garb of extreme poverty. Grief had whitened her hair, and it was fast falling from her head. Her eyes were sunken, and her features wan and wasted with woe.

"What is your name?" inquired one of the judges.

"I am called Marie Antoinette of Lorraine, in Austria," answered the queen.

"What is your condition?" was the next question.

"I am widow of Louis, formerly King of the French," was the reply.

"What is your age?"

"Thirty-seven."

The long act of accusation was then read. Among other charges was the atrocious one of attempting, by depravity and debauchery, to corrupt her own son, "with the intention of enervating the soul and body of that child, and of reigning, in his name, over the ruin of his understanding."

The queen recoiled from this charge with a gesture of horror, and, when asked why she did not reply to the accusation, she said,

"I have not answered it because there are accusations to which nature refuses to reply. I appeal to all mothers if such a crime be possible."

The trial continued for two days. When all the accusations had been heard, the queen was asked if she had any thing to say. She replied,

"I was a queen, and you took away my crown; a wife, and you killed my husband; a mother, and you deprived me of my children. My blood alone remains. Take it; but do not make me suffer long."

TRIAL OF MARIE ANTOINETTE.

At four o'clock on the morning of the 16th she listened to her sentence condemning her to die. In the dignity of silence, and without the tremor of a muscle, she accepted her doom. As she was led from the court-room to her dungeon, to prepare for her execution, the brutal populace, with stampings and clappings, applauded the sentence. Being indulged with pen and paper in these last hours, she wrote as follows to her sister:

"October 16th, half past four in the morning.

> "I write you, my sister, for the last time. I have been condemned, not to an ignominious death—that only awaits criminals—but to go and rejoin your brother. Innocent as he, I hope to show the same firmness as he did in these last moments. I grieve bitterly at leaving my poor children; you know that I existed but for them and you—you who have, by your friendship, sacrificed all to be with us. In what a position do I leave you. I have learned, by the pleadings on my trial, that my daughter was separated from you. Alas! my poor child. I dare not write to her. She could not receive my letter. I know not even if this may reach you. Receive my blessing for both.
>
> "I hope one day, when they are older, they may rejoin you and rejoice in liberty at your tender care. May their friendship and mutual confidence form their happiness. May my daughter feel that, at her age, she ought always to aid her brother with that advice with which the greater experience she possesses and her friendship should inspire her. May my son, on his part, render to his sister every care and service which affection can dictate. Let my son never forget the last words of his father. I repeat them to him expressly. *Let him never attempt to avenge our death.*"

Having finished the letter, which was long, she folded it and kissed it repeatedly, "as if she could thus transmit the warmth of her lips and the moisture of her tears to her children." She then threw herself upon the pallet and slept quietly for two or three hours. A few rays of morning light

were now struggling in through the grated bars of the window. The daughter of Madame Bault came in to dress her for the guillotine. She put on her white robe. A white handkerchief covered her shoulders, and a white cap, bound around her temples by a black ribbon, covered her hair.

It was a cold autumnal morning, and a chill fog filled the streets of Paris. At eleven o'clock the executioners led her from her cell. She cordially embraced the kind-hearted daughter of the concierge, and, having with her own hands cut off her hair, allowed herself to be bound, without a murmur, and issued from the steps of the Conciergerie. Instead of a carriage, the coarse car of the condemned awaited her at the gateway of the prison. For a moment she recoiled from this unanticipated humiliation, but immediately recovering herself she ascended the cart. There was no seat in the car, and, as her hands were bound behind her, she was unable to support herself from the jolting over the pavement. As she was jostled rudely to and fro, in the vain attempt to preserve her equilibrium, the multitudes thronging the streets shouted in derision. They had been taught to hate her, to regard her not only as the implacable foe of popular liberty, which she was, but as the most infamous of women, which she was not. "These," they cried, "are not your cushions of Trianon."

It was a long ride to the scaffold, during which the queen suffered all that insult, derision, and contumely can inflict. The procession crossed the Seine by the *Pont au Change*, and traversed the *Rue St. Honoré*. Upon reaching the Place of the Revolution the cart stopped for a moment near the entrance of the garden of the Tuileries. Marie Antoinette for a few moments contemplated in silence those scenes of former happiness and grandeur. A few more revolutions of the wheels placed her at the foot of the guillotine. She mounted to the scaffold, and inadvertently trod upon the foot of the executioner.

"Pardon me," said the queen, with as much courtesy as if she had been in one of the saloons of Versailles. Kneeling, she uttered a brief prayer, and then, turning her eyes to the distant towers of the Temple, she said,

"Adieu, once again, my children; I go to rejoin your father."

She was bound to the plank, and as it sank to its place the gleaming axe slid through the groove, and the head of the queen fell into the basket. The executioner seized the gory trophy by the hair, and, walking around the

scaffold, exhibited it to the crowd. One long cry of *Vive la République!* arose, and the crowd dispersed.

While these fearful scenes were passing, Madame Elizabeth and the princess remained in the tower of the Temple. Their jailers were commanded to give them no information whatever. The young dauphin was imprisoned by himself.

Six months of gloom and anguish which no pen can describe passed away, when, on the night of the 9th of May, 1794, as Madame Elizabeth and the young princess, Maria Theresa, were retiring to bed, a band of armed men, with lanterns, broke into their room, and said to Madame Elizabeth,

"You must immediately go with us."

"And my niece?" anxiously inquired the meek and pious aunt, ever forgetful of self in her solicitude for others. "Can she go too?"

"We want you only now. We will take care of her by-and-by," was the unfeeling answer.

The saint-like Madame Elizabeth saw that the long-dreaded hour of separation had come, and that her tender niece was to be left, unprotected and alone, exposed to the brutality of her jailers. She pressed Maria Theresa to her bosom, and wept in uncontrollable grief. But still, endeavoring to comfort the heart-stricken child, she said,

"I shall probably soon return again, my dear Maria."

"No, you won't, citoyenne," rudely interrupted one of the officers. "You will never ascend these stairs again. So take your bonnet, and come down."

The soldiers seized her, led her down the stairs, and thrust her into a carriage. It was midnight. Driving violently through the streets, they soon reached the gateway of the Conciergerie. The Revolutionary Tribunal was, even at that hour, in session. The princess was dragged immediately to their bar. With twenty-four others of all ages and both sexes, she was condemned to die. Her crime was that she was sister of the king, and in heart hostile to the Revolution. She was led to one of the dungeons to be dressed for the scaffold. In this hour Christian faith was triumphant. Trusting in God, all her sorrows vanished, and her soul was in perfect peace.

With her twenty-two companions, all of noble birth, she was placed in the cart of the condemned, her hands bound behind her, and conducted to

the guillotine. Madame Elizabeth was reserved to the last. One by one her companions were led up the scaffold before her, and she saw their heads drop into the basket. She then peacefully placed her head upon the pillow of death, and passed away, one of the purest and yet most suffering of earthly spirits, to the bosom of her God.

The young dauphin lingered for eighteen months in his cell, suffering inconceivable cruelties from his jailer, a wretch by the name of Simon, until he died on the 9th of June, 1795, in the tenth year of his age. Maria Theresa now alone remained of the family of Louis XVI. She had now been in prison more than two years. At length, so much sympathy was excited in behalf of this suffering child, that the Assembly consented to exchange her with the Austrian government for four French officers.

LOUIS XVII. IN PRISON.

On the 19th of December, 1795, she was led from the Temple, and, ample arrangements having been made for her journey, she was conducted, with every mark of respect and sympathy, to the frontiers. In the Austrian

court, love and admiration encircled her. But this stricken child of grief had received wounds which time could never entirely heal. A full year passed before a smile could ever be won to visit her cheek. She subsequently married her cousin, the Duke of Angoulême, son of Charles X. With the return of the Bourbons she returned to her ancestral halls of the Tuileries and Versailles. But upon the second expulsion of the Bourbons she fled with them, and died, a few years ago, at an advanced age, universally respected. Such was the wreck of the royal family of France by the storm of revolution.

FOOTNOTES:

401. Thomas Jefferson, during his residence in Paris, formed a very unfavorable opinion of Marie Antoinette. Speaking of the good intentions of Louis XVI., he says, "But he had a queen of absolute sway over his weak mind and timid virtue, and of a character the reverse of his in all points. This angel, as gaudily painted in the rhapsodies of Burke with some smartness of fancy but no sound sense, was proud, disdainful of restraint, indignant at all obstacles to her will, eager in pursuit of pleasure, and firm enough to hold to her desires or perish in their wreck. Her inordinate gamblings and dissipations, with those of the Count d'Artois and others of her clique, had been a sensible item in the exhaustion of the treasury, which called into action the reforming hand of the nation; and her opposition to it, her inflexible perverseness and dauntless spirit led herself to the guillotine, drew the king on with her, and plunged the world into crimes and calamities which will for ever stain the pages of modern history. I have ever believed that had there been no queen there would have been no revolution. The king would have gone hand in hand with the wisdom of his sounder counselors, who, guided by the increased lights of the age, wished only, with the same pace, to advance the principles of their social Constitution. The deed which closed the mortal course of these sovereigns I shall neither approve nor condemn."—*Life of Jefferson, by Randall*, vol i., p. 533.

As Jefferson was intimate with La Fayette and other prominent popular leaders, it is evident that these views were those which were generally entertained of the queen at that time. It is deeply to be regretted that no subsequent developments can lead one to doubt that they were essentially correct. While we weep over the woes of the queen we must not forget that she was endeavoring with all her energy to rivet the chains of unlimited despotism upon twenty-five millions of people.

Chapter XXXIV.
The Jacobins Triumphant

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Views of the Girondists.—Anecdote of Vergniaud.—The Girondists brought to Trial.—Suicide of Valazé.—Anguish of Desmoulins.—Fonfrede and Ducos.—Last Supper of the Girondists.—Their Execution.—The Duke of Orleans; his Execution.—Activity of the Guillotine.—Humane Legislation.—Testimony of Desodoards.—Anacharsis Cloots.—The New Era.

The Jacobins now resolved to free themselves from all internal foes, that they might more vigorously cope with all Europe in arms against them. Marie Antoinette was executed the 16th of October. On the 22d, the Girondists, twenty-two in number, were brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. They were the most illustrious men of the most noble party to which the Revolution had given birth. They had demolished a despotic throne that they might establish a constitutional monarchy upon the model of that of England.[402] With great generosity they had placed Louis XVI. on that throne, and he had feigned to accept the Constitution. But with hypocrisy which even his subsequent woes can not obliterate, he secretly rallied his nobles around him, or rather allowed them to use him as their leader, and appealed to the armies of foreign despotisms to overthrow the free Constitution and re-establish the old feudal tyranny.

"The question thenceforth was, whether their sons should, as in times past (as in Mr. Burke's splendid Age of Chivalry), be sent to manure Europe with their bodies, in wars undertaken at the nod of a courtesan—whether their wives and daughters, cursed with beauty enough to excite a transient emotion of sensuality, should be lured and torn from them and debauched—whether every man who dared to utter a manly political thought or to assert his rights against rank should be imprisoned at pleasure without a hearing—whether the toiling masses, for the purpose of

supporting lascivious splendor, of building *Parcs aux Cerfs*, of pensioning discarded mistresses, of swiftly enriching corrupt favorites and minions of every stamp, should be so taxed that the light and air of heaven hardly came to them untaxed, and that they should be so sunk by exactions of every kind in the dregs of indigence that a short crop compelled them to live on food that the hounds, if not the swine, of their task-masters would reject; and, finally, whether, when, in the bloody sweat of their agony, they asked some mitigation of their hard fate, they should be answered by the bayonets of foreign mercenaries; and a people—stout manhood, gentle womanhood, gray-haired age, and tender infancy, turned their pale faces upward and shrieked for food, fierce, licentious nobles should scornfully bid them eat grass."[403]

In this terrible dilemma, the Girondists felt compelled to abandon the newly-established Constitutional monarchy, which had proved treacherous to its trust, and to fall back upon a republic, as their only asylum from destruction, and as the only possible refuge for French liberty. But the populace of France, ignorant and irreligious, were unfitted for a republic. Universal suffrage threw the power into the hands of millions of newly-emancipated slaves. Violence and blood commenced their reign. The Girondists in vain endeavored to stem the flood. They were overwhelmed. Such is their brief history.

The Girondists had been for some time confined in the dungeons of the Conciergerie. They were in a state of extreme misery. Vergniaud, one of the most noble and eloquent of men, was their recognized leader. His brother-in-law, M. Alluaud, came to the prison to bring him some money. A child of M. Alluaud, ten years of age, accompanied his father. Seeing his uncle with sunken eyes and haggard cheeks and disordered hair, and with his garments falling in tatters around him, the child was terrified, and, bursting into tears, clung to his father's knees.

"My child," said Vergniaud, taking him in his lap, "look well at me. When you are a man you can say that you saw Vergniaud, the founder of the Republic, at the most glorious period, and in the most splendid costume he ever wore—that in which he suffered the persecution of wretches, and in which he prepared to die for liberty."

The child remembered these words, and repeated them fifty years after to Lamartine. At ten o'clock in the morning of the 26th of October the accused were brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Two files of *gens d'armes* conducted them into the hall of audience and placed them on the prisoners' bench.[404] The *act of accusation*, drawn up by Robespierre and St. Just,[405] from an exceedingly envenomed pamphlet written by Camille Desmoulins, entitled *History of the Faction of the Gironde,* was long and bitter. The trial lasted several days.

On the 30th of October, at eight o'clock in the evening, the debate was closed. At midnight they were summoned to the bar to hear the verdict of the jury. It declared them all guilty of treason, and condemned them to die in the morning. One of the condemned, Valazé, immediately plunged a concealed poniard into his heart, and fell dead upon the floor. Camille Desmoulins, on hearing the verdict, was overwhelmed with remorse, and cried out,

"It is my pamphlet which has killed them. Wretch that I am, I can not bear the sight of my work. I feel their blood fall on the hand that has denounced them."

There were two brothers, Fonfrede and Ducos, among the condemned, sitting side by side, both under twenty-eight years of age. Fonfrede threw his arms around the neck of Ducos, and bursting into tears said,

"My dear brother, I cause your death; but we shall die together."

Vergniaud sat in silence, with an expression of proud defiance and contempt. Lasource repeated the sententious saying of one of the ancients, "I die on the day when the people have lost their reason. You will die when they have recovered it." As they left the court to return to their cells, there to prepare for the guillotine, they spontaneously struck up together the hymn of the Marseillais:

> "Allons, enfans de la patrie,
> Le jour de gloire est arrivé;
> Contre nous de la tyrannie
> L'étendard sanglant est levé."[406]

As they passed along the corridors of the prison, their sublime requiem echoed along the gloomy vaults, and awoke the sleepers in the deepest

dungeons. They were all placed in one large room opening into several cells. The lifeless body of Valazé was deposited in one of the corners; for, by a decree of the Tribunal, his remains were to be taken in the cart of the condemned to be beheaded with the rest. A sumptuous banquet was sent in to them by their friends as their last repast. The table was richly spread, decorated with flowers, and supplied with all the delicacies which Paris could furnish. A Constitutional priest, the Abbé Lambert, a friend of the Girondists, had obtained admission to the prison, to administer to them the last supports of religion and to accompany them to the guillotine. To him we are indebted for the record of these last scenes.

Vergniaud, thirty-five years of age, presided. He had but little to bind him to life, having neither father nor mother, wife nor child. In quietness and with subdued tones they partook of their repast. When the cloth was removed, and the flowers and the wine alone remained, the conversation became more animated. The young men attempted with songs and affected gayety to disarm death of its terror; but Vergniaud, rallying to his aid his marvelous eloquence, endeavored to recall them to more worthy thoughts.

"My friends," said he, sorrowing more over the misfortunes of the Republic than over his own, "we have killed the tree by pruning it. It was too aged. The soil is too weak to nourish the roots of civic, liberty. This people is too childish to wield its laws without hurting itself. It will return to its kings as babes return to their toys. We were deceived as to the age in which we were born and in which we die for the freedom of the world."

"What shall we be doing to-morrow at this time?" asked Ducos. Each answered according to his skepticism or his faith. Vergniaud again spake. "Never," says the Abbé Lambert, "had his look, his gesture, his language, and his voice more profoundly affected his hearers." His discourse was of the immortality of the soul, to which all listened deeply moved, and many wept.

THE GIRONDISTS ON THEIR WAY TO EXECUTION.

A few rays of morning light now began to struggle in at their dungeon windows. The executioners soon entered to cut off their hair and robe them for the scaffold. At ten o'clock they were marched in a column to the gate of the prison, where carts, surrounded by an immense crowd, awaited them. As they entered the carts they all commenced singing in chorus the Marseilles Hymn, and continued the impassioned strains until they reached the scaffold. One after another they ascended the scaffold. Sillery was the first who ascended. He was bound to the plank, but continued in a full, strong voice to join in the song, till the glittering axe glided down the groove and his head dropped into the basket. Each one followed his example. The song grew fainter as head after head fell, till at last one voice only remained. It was that of Vergniaud. As he was bound to the plank he commenced anew the strain,

"Allons, enfans de la patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrivé."

The axe fell, and the lips of Vergniaud were silent in death. In thirty-one minutes the executioner had beheaded them all. Their bodies were thrown into one cart, and were cast into a grave by the side of that of Louis XVI.[407]

On the 6th of November the Duke of Orleans was taken from prison and led before the Tribunal. As there was no serious charge to be brought against him, he had not apprehended condemnation. But he was promptly doomed to die. As he was conducted back to his cell to prepare for immediate death, he exclaimed, in the utmost excitement of indignation,

"The wretches! I have given them all—rank, fortune, ambition, honor, the future reputation of my house—and this is the recompense they reserve for me!"

At three o'clock he was placed in the cart with three other condemned prisoners. The prince was elegantly attired and all eyes were riveted upon him. With an air of indifference he gazed upon the crowd, saying nothing which could reveal the character of his thoughts. On mounting the scaffold the executioner wished to draw off his boots.

"No, no," said the duke, "you will do it more easily afterward."

He looked intently for a moment at the keen-edged axe, and, without a word, submitted to his fate. Madame Roland and others of the most illustrious of the friends of freedom and of France soon followed to the scaffold. And now every day the guillotine was active as the efficient agent of government, extinguishing all opposition and silencing every murmur. The prisons were full, new arrests were every day made, and dismay paralyzed all hearts. Four thousand six hundred in the prisons of Paris alone were awaiting that trial which almost surely led to condemnation.

The Jacobin leaders, trembling before Europe in arms, felt that there was no safety for France but in the annihilation of all internal foes. Danton, Marat, Robespierre, were not men who loved blood and cruelty; they were resolute fanatics who believed it to be well to cut off the heads of many thousand reputed aristocrats, that a nation of thirty millions might enjoy popular liberty. While the Revolutionary Tribunal was thus

mercilessly plying the axe of the executioner, the National Convention, where these Jacobins reigned supreme, were enacting many laws which breathed the spirit of liberty and humanity. The taxes were equally distributed in proportion to property. Provision was made for the poor and infirm. All orphans were adopted by the Republic. Liberty of conscience was proclaimed. Slavery and the slave-trade were indignantly abolished. Measures were adopted for a general system of popular instruction, and decisive efforts were made to unite the rich and the poor in bonds of sympathy and alliance.[408]

We can not give a better account of the state of Paris at this time than in the words of Desodoards, a calm philosophic writer, who had ardently espoused the cause of the Revolution, and who consequently will not be suspected of exaggeration.

"What then," says he, "was this Revolutionary government? Every right, civil and political, was destroyed. Liberty of the press and of thought was at an end. The whole people were divided into two classes, the privileged and the proscribed. Property was wantonly violated, *lettres de cachet* re-established, the asylum of dwellings exposed to the most tyrannical inquisition, and justice stripped of every appearance of humanity and honor. France was covered with prisons; all the excesses of anarchy and despotism struggling amid a confused multitude of committees; terror in every heart; the scaffold devouring a hundred every day, and threatening to devour a still greater number; in every house melancholy and mourning, and in every street the silence of the tomb.

"War was waged against the tenderest emotions of nature. Was a tear shed over the tomb of father, wife, or friend, it was, according to these Jacobins, a robbery of the Republic. Not to rejoice when the Jacobins rejoiced was treason to freedom. All the mob of low officers of justice, some of whom could scarcely read, sported with the lives of men without the slightest shame or remorse. Often an act of accusation was served upon one person which was intended for another. The officer only *changed the name* on perceiving his error, and often did *not* change it. Mistakes of the most inconceivable nature were made with impunity. The Duchess of Biron was judged by an act drawn up against her agent. A young man of *twenty* was guillotined for having, as it was alleged, a *son* bearing arms

against France. A lad of sixteen, by the name of Mallet, was arrested under an indictment for a man of forty, named Bellay.

"'What is your age?' inquired the president, looking at him with some surprise.

"'Sixteen,' replied the youth.

"'Well, you are quite forty in crime,' said the magistrate; 'take him to the guillotine.'

"From every corner of France victims were brought in carts to the Conciergerie. This prison was emptied every day by the guillotine, and refilled from other prisons. These removals were made in the dark, lest public sympathy should be excited. Fifty or sixty poor creatures, strait bound, conducted by men of ferocious aspect, a drawn sabre in one hand and a lighted torch in the other, passed in this manner through the silence of night. The passenger who chanced to meet them had to smother his pity. A sigh would have united him to the funeral train.

READING THE LIST OF THE VICTIMS IN THE PRISONS OF PARIS.

"The prisons were the abode of every species of suffering. The despair which reigned in these sepulchres was terrific: one finished his existence by poison; another dispatched himself by a nail; another dashed his head against the walls of his cell; some lost their reason. Those who had sufficient fortitude waited patiently for the executioner. Every house of arrest was required to furnish a certain number of victims. The turnkeys went with these mandates of accusation from chamber to chamber in the dead of night. The prisoners, starting from their sleep at the voice of their Cerberuses, supposed their end had arrived. Thus warrants of death for thirty threw hundreds into consternation.[409]

"At first the sheriffs ranged fifteen at a time in their carts, then thirty, and about the time of the fall of Robespierre preparations had been made for the execution of one hundred and fifty at a time. An aqueduct had been

contrived to carry off the blood. In these batches, as they were called, were often united people of the most opposite systems and habits. Sometimes whole generations were destroyed in a day. Malesherbes, at the age of eighty, perished with his sister, his daughter, his son-in-law, his grandson, and his granddaughter. Forty young women were brought to the guillotine for having danced at a ball given by the King of Prussia at Verdun. Twenty-two peasant women, whose husbands had been executed in La Vendée, were beheaded."

Such was the thraldom from which, at last, the empire of Napoleon rescued France. Nothing less than the strength of his powerful arm could have wrought out the achievement.

In the midst of such scenes it is not strange that all respect should have been renounced for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Jacobins of Paris crowded the Convention, demanding the abjuration of all forms of religion and all modes of worship. They governed the Convention with despotic sway. The Commune of Paris, invested with the local police of the city, passed laws prohibiting the clergy from exercising religious worship outside the churches. None but friends and relatives were to be allowed to follow the remains of the dead to the grave. All religious symbols were ordered to be effaced from the cemeteries, and to be replaced by a statue of Sleep. The following ravings of Anacharsis Cloots, a wealthy Prussian baron, who styled himself the orator of the human race, and who was one of the most conspicuous of the Jacobin agitators, forcibly exhibits the spirit of the times:[410]

"Paris, the metropolis of the globe, is the proper post for the orator of the human race. I have not left Paris since 1789. It was then that I redoubled my zeal against the pretended sovereigns of earth and heaven. I boldly preached that there is no other god but Nature, no other sovereign but the human race—the people-god. The people is sufficient for itself. Nature kneels not before herself. Religion is the only obstacle to universal happiness. It is high time to destroy it."

The popular current in Paris now set very strongly against all religion. Infidel and atheistic principles were loudly proclaimed. The unlettered populace, whose faith was but superstition, were easily swept along by the current. The Convention made a feeble resistance, but soon yielded to the

general impulse. In the different sections of Paris, gatherings of the populace abjured all religion. The fanaticism spread like wild-fire to the distant departments. The churches were stripped of their baptismal plate and other treasures, and the plunder was sent to the Convention. Processions paraded the streets, singing, derisively, Hallelujahs, and profaning with sacrilegious caricature all the ceremonies of religion. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered to an ass.

The Convention had appointed a committee of twelve men, called the Committee of Public Safety, and invested them with dictatorial power. The whole revolutionary power was now lodged in their hands. They appointed such sub-committees as they pleased, and governed France with terrific energy. The Revolutionary Tribunal was but one of their committees. In all the departments they established their agencies. The Convention itself became powerless before this appalling despotism. This dictatorship was energetically supported by the mob of Paris; and the city government of Paris was composed of the most violent Jacobins, who were in perfect fraternity with the Committee of Public Safety. St. Just, who proposed in the Convention the establishment of this dictatorship, said,

> "You must no longer show any lenity to the enemies of the new order of things. Liberty must triumph at any cost. In the present circumstances of the Republic the Constitution can not be established; it would guarantee impunity to attacks on our liberty, because it would be deficient in the violence necessary to restrain them."

This Committee, overawing the Convention, constrained the establishment of a new era. To obliterate the Sabbath, they divided the year into twelve months of thirty days each, each month to consist of three weeks of ten days each. The tenth day was devoted to festivals. The five surplus days were placed at the end of the year, and were consecrated to games and rejoicing. Thus energetically were measures adopted to obliterate entirely all traces of the Sabbath. There were thousands in France who looked upon these measures with unutterable disgust, but they were overwhelmed by the powers of anarchy. Anxiously they waited for a

deliverer. In Napoleon they found one, who was alike the foe of the despotism of the Bourbons and the despotism of the mob.

FOOTNOTES:

402. La Fayette was an illustrious member of this party. Even Jefferson advised to make the English Constitution the model for France. He was present at the opening of the Assembly of Notables, and soon after wrote to La Fayette, "Keeping the good model of your neighboring country before your eyes, you may get on step by step toward a good Constitution. Though that model is not perfect, yet, as it would unite more suffrages than any new one which could be proposed, it is better to make that the object."—*Life of Thomas Jefferson, by Henry S. Randall*, vol. i., p. 406.

403. Henry S. Randall, Life of Jefferson, vol. i., p. 529.

404. "Never since the Knights Templar had a party appeared more numerous, more illustrious, or more eloquent. The renown of the accused, their long possession of power, their present danger, and that love of vengeance which arises in men's hearts at the spectacle of mighty reverses of fortune, had collected a crowd in the precincts of the Revolutionary Tribunal. A strong armed force surrounded the gates of the Conciergerie and the Palais de Justice. The cannon, the uniforms, the sentinels, the *gens d'armes*, the naked sabres, all announced one of those political crises in which a trial is a battle and justice an execution."—*Hist. Gir., Lamartine*, vol. ii., p. 169.

405. Such is the statement of Lamartine. Thiers, however, says that the act was drawn up by Amar, a barrister of Grenoble.

406. "Come, children of your country, come,
The day of glory dawns on high,
And tyranny has wide unfurl'd
Her blood-stained banner in the sky."

407. Edmund Burke has most unpardonably calumniated these noble men. Even Prof. Smyth, who espouses his opinions, says, "Burke was a man who, from the ardor of his temperament and the vehemence of his eloquence, might be almost said to have ruined every cause and every party that he espoused. No mind, however great, that will not bow to the superiority of his genius; yet no mind, however inferior, that will not occasionally feel itself entitled to look down upon him, from the total want which he sometimes shows of all calmness and candor, and even, at particular moments, of all reasonableness and propriety of thought."—*Lectures on the French Revolution, by Wm. Smyth*, vol. iii., p. 4.

408. History of the Girondists, Lamartine, vol. iii., p. 291.

409. "There were in the prisons of Paris on the 1st of September, 1793, 597; October 1, 2400; November 1, 3203; December 1, 4130; and in six months after, 11,400."—*Hist. Phil. de la Rev. de France, par Ant. Fantin Desodoards.*

410. Cloots declared himself "the personal enemy of Jesus Christ." France adopted the atheistic principles of Cloots, and sent him to the guillotine. See article Cloots, Enc. Am.

Chapter XXXV.
Fall of the Hebertists and of the Dantonists

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Continued Persecution of the Girondists.—Robespierre opposes the Atheists.—Danton, Souberbielle, and Camille Desmoulins.—The *Vieux Cordelier*.—The Hebertists executed.—Danton assailed.—Interview between Danton and Robespierre.—Danton warned of his Peril.—Camille Desmoulins and others arrested.—Lucile, the Wife of Desmoulins.—Letters.—Execution of the Dantonists.—Arrest and Execution of Lucile.—Toulon recovered by Bonaparte.

The leaders of the Girondists were now destroyed, and the remnants of the party were prosecuted with unsparing ferocity. On the 11th of November, Bailly, the former mayor, the friend of La Fayette, the philanthropist and the scholar, was dragged to the scaffold. The day was cold and rainy. His crime was having unfurled the red flag in the Field of Mars, to quell the riot there, on the 17th of July, 1791. He was condemned to be executed on the field which was the theatre of his alleged crime. Behind the cart which carried him they affixed the flag which he had spread. A crowd followed, heaping upon him the most cruel imprecations. On reaching the scaffold, some one cried out that the field of the federation ought not to be polluted with his blood. Immediately the mob rushed upon the guillotine, tore it down, and erected it again upon a dunghill on the banks of the Seine. They dragged Bailly from the tumbril, and compelled him to make the tour of the Field of Mars on foot. Bareheaded, with his hands bound behind him, and with no other garment than a shirt, the sleet glued his hair and froze upon his breast. They pelted him with mud, spat in his face, and whipped him with the flag, which they dipped in the gutters. The old man fell exhausted. They lifted him up again, and goaded him on. Blood, mingled with mire, streamed down his face, depriving him of human aspect. Shouts of derision greeted these horrors. The freezing wind and exhaustion caused an involuntary shivering. Some one cried out, "You tremble, Bailly." "Yes,

my friend," replied the heroic old man, "but it is with cold."[411] After five hours of such a martyrdom, the axe released him from his sufferings.

Pétion and Buzot wandered many days and nights in the forest. At length their remains were found, half devoured by wolves. Whether they perished of cold and starvation, or sought relief from their misery in voluntary death, is not known.

The illustrious Condorcet, alike renowned for his philosophical genius and his eloquent advocacy of popular rights, had been declared an outlaw. For several months he had been concealed in the house of Madame Verney, a noble woman, who periled her own life that she might save that of her friend. At last Condorcet, learning from the papers that death was denounced against all who concealed a proscribed individual, resolved, at every hazard, to leave the roof of his benefactress. For some time he wandered through the fields in disguise, until he was arrested and thrown into prison. On the following morning, March 28, 1794, he was found dead on the floor of his room, having swallowed poison, which for some time he carried about with him.

"It would be difficult in that or any other age to find two men of more active or, indeed, enthusiastic benevolence than Condorcet and La Fayette. Besides this, Condorcet was one of the most profound thinkers of his time, and will be remembered as long as genius is honored among us. La Fayette was no doubt inferior to Condorcet in point of ability, but he was the intimate friend of Washington, on whose conduct he modeled his own, and by whose side he had fought for the liberties of America; his integrity was, and still is, unsullied, and his character had a chivalrous and noble turn which Burke, in his better days, would have been the first to admire. Both, however, were natives of that hated country whose liberties they vainly attempted to achieve. On this account Burke declared Condorcet to be guilty of 'impious sophistry,' to be a 'fanatic atheist and furious democratic republican,' and to be capable of the 'lowest as well as the highest and most determined villainies.' As to La Fayette, when an attempt was made to mitigate the cruel treatment he was receiving from the Prussian government, Burke not only opposed the motion made for that purpose in the House of Commons, but took the opportunity of grossly insulting the unfortunate captive, who was then languishing in a dungeon. So dead had

he become on this subject, even to the common instincts of our nature, that in his place in parliament he could find no better way of speaking of this injured and high-souled man than by calling him a ruffian. 'I would not,' says Burke, '*debase*[412] my humanity by supporting an application in behalf of so horrid a ruffian.'"[413]

DEATH OF CONDORCET.

Madame Roland was led to the guillotine, evincing heroism which the world has never seen surpassed. Her husband, in anguish, unable to survive her, and hunted by those thirsting for his blood, anticipated the guillotine by plunging a stiletto into his own heart.

Danton and Robespierre were both opposed to such cruel executions, and especially to the establishment in France of that system of atheism which degraded man into merely the reptile of an hour. When Robespierre was informed of the atrocities which attended the execution of Bailly, in shame and grief he shut himself up in his room, saying, with prophetic foresight, to his host Duplay, "It is thus that they will martyrize ourselves."

Hebert[414] and the atheists were now dominant in the Commune of Paris, and Danton and Robespierre organized a party to crush them. Hebert soon saw indications of this movement, and began to tremble. He complained in the Jacobin Club that Robespierre and Danton were plotting against him. Robespierre was present on the occasion, and, with his accustomed audacity, immediately ascended the tribune and hurled his anathemas upon the heads of these blood-crimsoned fanatics.

"There are men," said he, "who, under the pretext of destroying superstition, would fain make a sort of religion of atheism itself. Every man has a right to think as he pleases; whoever would make a crime of this is a madman. But the legislator who should adopt the system of atheism would be a hundred times more insane. The National Convention abhors such a system. It is a political body, not a maker of creeds. *Atheism is aristocratic.* The idea of a great Being who watches over oppressed innocence and who punishes triumphant guilt is quite popular. The people, the unfortunate, applaud me. *If God did not exist, it would behoove man to invent him.*"

One of the last evenings in the month of January, Danton, Souberbielle, one of the members of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and Camille Desmoulins came from the Palace of Justice together. It was a cold gloomy winter's night. It had been a day of blood. Fifteen heads had fallen upon the guillotine and twenty-seven were condemned to die on the morrow. These three men were all appalled by the progress of events, and for some time walked along in silence. On reaching Pont Neuf, Danton turned suddenly round to Souberbielle and said,

> "Do you know that, at the pace we are now going, there will speedily be no safety for any person? The best patriots are confounded with traitors. Generals who have shed their blood for the Republic perish on the scaffold. I am weary of living. Look there; the very river seems to flow with blood."

"True," replied Souberbielle, "the sky is red, and there are many showers of blood behind those clouds. Those who were to be judges have become but executioners. When I refuse an innocent head to their knife I

am accused of sympathy with traitors. What can I do? I am but an obscure patriot. Ah, if I were Danton!"

"All this," replied Danton, "excites horror in me. But be silent. Danton sleeps; he will awake at the right moment. I am a man of revolution, but not a man of slaughter. But you," he added, addressing Camille Desmoulins, "why do you keep silence?"

"I am weary of silence," was Desmoulins's reply. "My hand weighs heavily, and I have sometimes the impulse to sharpen my pen into a dagger and stab these scoundrels. Let them beware. My ink is more indelible than their blood. It stains for immortality."

"Bravo!" cried Danton. "Begin to-morrow. You began the Revolution; be it you who shall now most thoroughly urge it. Be assured this hand shall aid you. You know whether or not it be strong."

The three friends separated at Danton's door. The doom of the miserable Hebert and his party was now sealed. Robespierre, Danton, and Camille Desmoulins were against him. They could wield resistless influences. The next day Camille Desmoulins commenced a series of papers called the *Vieux Cordelier*. He took the first number to Danton and then to Robespierre. They both approved, and the warfare against Hebert and his party was commenced. The conflict was short and desperate; each party knew that the guillotine was the doom of the vanquished.[415] Robespierre and Danton were victors. Hebert, Cloots, and their friends, nineteen in number, were arrested and condemned to death. On the 24th of March, 1794, five carts laden with the Hebertists proceeded from the Conciergerie to the guillotine. Cloots died firmly. Hebert was in a paroxysm of terror, which excited the contempt and derision of the mob.

The bold invectives against the Reign of Terror in the *Vieux Cordelier*, written by Desmoulins, began to alarm the Committee of Public Safety. Danton and Robespierre were implicated. They were accused of favoring moderate measures, and of being opposed to those acts of bloody rigor which were deemed necessary to crush the aristocrats. Danton and Desmoulins were in favor of a return to mercy. Robespierre, though opposed to cruelty and to needless carnage, was sternly for death as the doom of every one not warmly co-operating with the Revolution. To save himself from suspicion he became the accuser of his two friends. And now

it came the turn of Danton and Desmoulins to tremble. For five years Danton and Robespierre had fought together to overthrow royalty and found the Republic. But Danton was disgusted with carnage, and had withdrawn from the Committee of Public Safety.

"Danton, do you know," said Eglantine to him one day, "of what you are accused? They say that you have only launched the car of the Revolution to enrich yourself, while Robespierre has remained poor in the midst of the monarchical treasures thrown at his feet."

"Well," replied Danton, "do you know what that proves? that I love gold, and that Robespierre loves blood. Robespierre is afraid of money lest it should stain his hands."

Robespierre earnestly wished to associate Danton with him in all the rigor of the Revolutionary government, for he respected the power of this bold, indomitable man. They met at a dinner-party, through the agency of a mutual friend, when matters were brought to a crisis. They engaged in a dispute, Danton denouncing and reviling the acts of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and Robespierre defending them, until they separated in anger. The friends of Danton urged him either to escape by flight or to take advantage of his popularity and throw himself upon the army.

"My life is not worth the trouble," said Danton. "Besides, I am weary of blood. I had rather be guillotined than be a guillotiner. They dare not attack me. I am stronger than they."

A secret meeting of the Committee of Public Safety was convened by night, and Danton was accused of the "treason of clemency." A subaltern door-keeper heard the accusation, and ran to Danton's house to warn him of his peril and to offer him an asylum. The young and beautiful wife of Danton, with tears in her eyes, threw herself at his feet, and implored him, for her sake and for that of their children, to accept the proffered shelter. Danton proudly refused, saying,

> "They will deliberate long before they will dare to strike a man like me. While they deliberate I will surprise them."

He dismissed the door-keeper and retired to bed. At six o'clock *gens d'armes* entered his room with the order for his arrest.

"They dare, then," said Danton, crushing the paper in his hand. "They are bolder than I had thought them to be."

He dressed, embraced his wife convulsively, and was conducted to prison. At the same hour Camille Desmoulins and fourteen others, the supposed partisans of Danton, were also arrested. It was the 31st of March. Danton was taken to the Luxembourg. Here he found Desmoulins and his other friends already incarcerated. As Danton entered the gloomy portals of the prison he said,

> "At length I perceive that, in revolutions, the supreme power ultimately rests with the most abandoned."[416]

A crowd of the *detained* immediately gathered around him, amazed at that freak of fortune which had cast the most distinguished leader of the Jacobins into the dungeons of the accused. Danton was humiliated and annoyed by the gaze, and endeavored to veil his embarrassment under the guise of derision.

"Yes," said he, raising his head and forcing loud laughter, "it is Danton. Look at him well. The trick is well played. We must know how to praise our enemies when they conduct adroitly. I would never have believed that Robespierre could have juggled me thus." Then softening, and growing more sincere, he said, "Gentlemen, I hoped to have been the means of delivering you all from this place; but here I am among you, and no one can tell where this will end."

The accused Dantonists—accused of advocating moderate measures in the treatment of the enemies of the Revolution—were soon shut up in separate cells. The report of the arrest of men of such acknowledged power, and who had been so popular as patriots, spread anxiety and gloom through Paris. The warmest friends of the arrested dared not plead their cause; it would only have imperiled their own lives.

Even in the Assembly great excitement was produced by these important arrests. The members gathered in groups and spoke to each other in whispers, inquiring what all this meant and where it was to end. At last, Légendre ventured to ascend the tribune, and said,

"Citizens, four members of this Assembly have been arrested during the night. Danton is one. I know not the others. Citizens, I declare that I believe Danton to be as pure as myself; yet he is in a dungeon. They feared, no doubt, that his replies would overturn the accusations brought against him. I move, therefore, that, before you listen to any report, you send for the prisoners and hear them."

Robespierre immediately ascended the tribune and replied,

"By the unusual agitation which pervades this Assembly—by the sensation the words of the speaker you have just heard have produced, it is manifest that a question of great interest is before us—a question whether two or three individuals shall be preferred to the country. The question to-day is whether the interests of certain ambitious hypocrites shall prevail over the interests of the French nation. Légendre appears not to know the names of those who have been arrested. All the Convention knows them. His friend Lacroix is among the prisoners. Why does he pretend to be ignorant of it? Because he knows that he can not defend Lacroix without shame. He has spoken of Danton, doubtless because he thinks that a privilege is attached to this name. No! we will have no privilege. No! we will have no idols. We shall see to-day whether the Convention will break a false idol, long since decayed, or whether in its fall it will crush the Convention and the French people.

"I say, whoever now trembles is guilty, for never does innocence dread public surveillance. Me, too, have they tried to alarm. It has been attempted to make me believe that the danger which threatens Danton might reach me. I have been written to. The friends of Danton have sent me their letters; have besieged me with their importunities. They have thought that the remembrance of a former acquaintance, that a past belief in false virtues, might determine me to relax in my zeal

> and my passion for liberty. Well, then, I declare that none of these motives have touched my soul with the slightest impression; my life is for my country, my heart is exempt from fear.
>
> "I have seen in the flattery which has been addressed to me, in the concern of those who surrounded Danton, only signs of the terror which they felt, even before they were threatened. And I, too, have been the friend of Pétion; as soon as he was unmasked I abandoned him. I have also been acquainted with Roland; he became a traitor and I denounced him. Danton would take their place, and in my eyes he is but an enemy to his country."

Légendre, appalled, immediately retracted, and trembling for his life, like a whipped spaniel, crouched before the terrible dictator. At that moment St. Just came in, and read a long report against the members under arrest. The substance of the vague and rambling charges was that they had been bought up by the aristocrats and were enemies to their country. The Assembly listened without a murmur, and then unanimously, and even with applause, voted the impeachment of Danton and his friends. "Every one sought to gain time with tyranny, and gave up others' heads to save his own."[417]

The Dantonists were men of mark, and they now drank deeply of that bitter chalice which they had presented to so many lips. Camille Desmoulins, young, brilliant, enthusiastic, was one of the most fascinating of men. His youthful and beautiful wife, Lucile, he loved to adoration. They had one infant child, Horace, their pride and joy. Camille was asleep in the arms of his wife when the noise of the butt end of a musket on the threshold of his door aroused him. As the soldiers presented the order for his arrest, he exclaimed, in anguish, "This, then, is the recompense of the first voice of the Revolution."

Embracing his wife for the last time, and imprinting a kiss upon the cheek of his child asleep in the cradle, he was hurried to prison. Lucile, frantic with grief, ran through the streets of Paris to plead with Robespierre and others for her husband; but her lamentations were as

unavailing as the moaning wind. In the following tender strain Camille wrote his wife:

> "My prison recalls to my mind the garden where I spent eight years in beholding you. A glimpse of the garden of the Luxembourg brings back to me a crowd of remembrances of our loves. I am alone, but never have I been in thought, imagination, feeling nearer to you, your mother, and to my little Horace. I am going to pass all my time in prison in writing to you. I cast myself at your knees; I stretch out my arms to embrace you; I find you no more. Send me the glass on which are our two names; a book, which I bought some days ago, on the immortality of the soul. I have need of persuading myself that there is a God more just than man, and that I can not fail to see you again. Do not grieve too much over my thoughts, dearest; I do not yet despair of men. Yes! my beloved, we will see ourselves again in the garden of the Luxembourg. Adieu, Lucile! Adieu, Horace! I can not embrace you; but in the tears which I shed it appears that I press you again to my bosom.
>
> Thy Camille."

Lucile, frantic with grief, made the most desperate efforts to gain access to Robespierre, but she was sternly repulsed. She then thus imploringly wrote to him,

> "Can you accuse us of treason, you who have profited so much by the efforts we have made for our country? Camille has seen the birth of your pride, the path you desired to tread, but he has recalled your ancient friendship and shrunk from the idea of accusing a friend, a companion of his labors. That hand which has pressed yours has too soon abandoned the pen, since it could no longer trace your praise; and you, you send him to death. But, Robespierre, will you really accomplish the deadly projects which doubtless the vile souls which surround you have inspired you with? Have you forgotten those bonds

which Camille never recalls without grief? you who prayed for our union, who joined our hands in yours, who have smiled upon my son whose infantile hands have so often caressed you? Can you, then, reject my prayers, despise my tears, and trample justice under foot? For you know it yourself, we do not merit the fate they are preparing for us, and you can avert it. If it strike us, it is you who will have ordered it. But what is, then, the crime of my Camille?

"I have not his pen to defend him. But the voice of good citizens, and your heart, if it is sensible, will plead for me. Do you believe that people will gain confidence in you by seeing you immolate your best friends? Do you think that they will bless him who regards neither the tears of the widow nor the death of the orphan? Poor Camille! in the simplicity of his heart, how far was he from suspecting the fate which awaits him to-day! He thought to labor for your glory in pointing out to you what was still wanting to our republic. He has, no doubt, been calumniated to you, Robespierre, for you can not believe him guilty. Consider that he has never required the death of any one—that he has never desired to injure by your power, and that you were his oldest and his best friend. And you are about to kill us both! For to strike him is to kill me—"

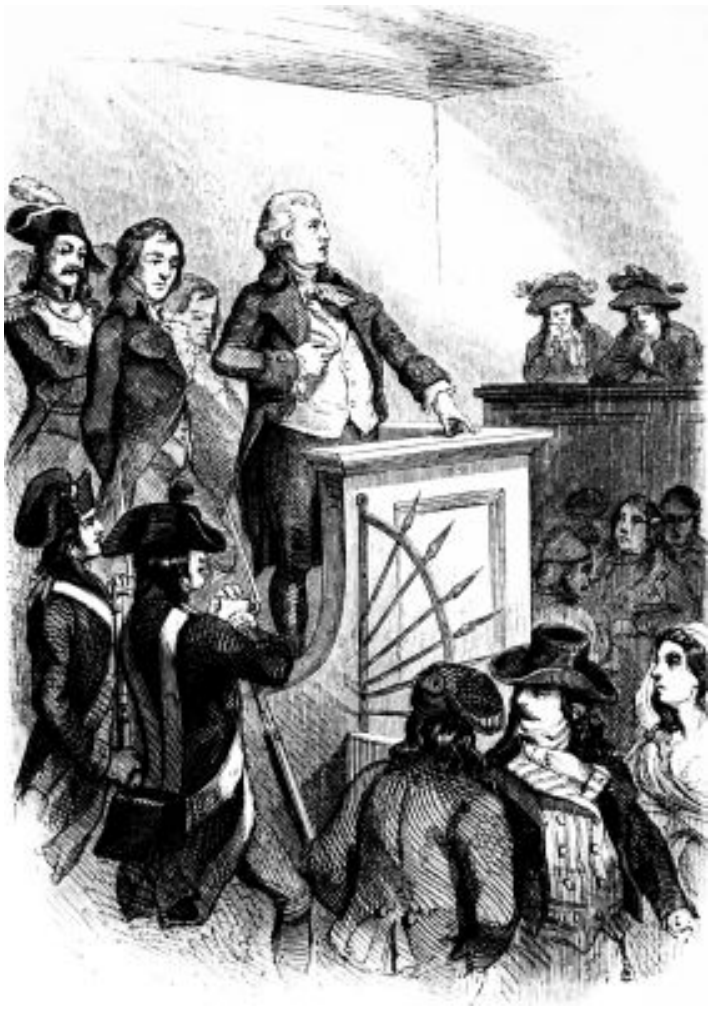
The unfinished letter she intrusted to her mother, but it never reached the hands of Robespierre. The prisoners were soon taken to the Conciergerie and plunged into the same dungeon into which they had thrown the Girondists. The day of trial was appointed without delay. It was the 3d of April. As the prisoners, fourteen in number, were arrayed before the Tribunal, the president, Hermann, inquired of Danton, in formal phrase, his name, age, and residence.

"My name," was the proud and defiant reply, "is Danton, well enough known in the Revolution. I am thirty-five years old. My residence will soon be void, and my name will exist in the Pantheon of history."

To the same question Camille Desmoulins replied, "I am thirty-three, a fatal age to revolutionists,—the age of the *sans culotte* Jesus when he died."

The trial lasted three days. Danton, in his defense, struggled like a lion in the toils. An immense crowd filled the court and crowded the surrounding streets. The windows were open, and the thunders of his voice were frequently heard even to the other side of the Seine. The people in the streets, whom he doubtless meant to influence, caught up his words and transmitted them from one to another. Some indications of popular sympathy alarmed the Tribunal, and it was voted that the accused were wanting in respect to the court, and should no longer be heard in their defense. They were immediately condemned to die.

They were reconducted to their dungeon to prepare for the guillotine. The fortitude of Camille Desmoulins was weakened by the strength of his domestic attachments. "Oh, my dear Lucile! Oh, my Horace! what will become of them!" he incessantly cried, while tears flooded his eyes. Seizing a pen, he hastily wrote a few last words to Lucile, which remain one of the most touching memorials of grief.



DANTON'S DEFENSE.

"I have dreamed," he wrote, "of a republic which all the world would have adored. I could not have believed that men were so cruel and unjust. I do not dissimulate that I die a victim to my friendship for Danton. I thank my assassins for allowing me to die with Philippeaux. Pardon, my dear friend, my true life which I lost from the moment they separated us. I occupy myself with my memory. I ought much rather to cause you to forget it, my Lucile. I conjure you do not call to me by your cries. They would rend my heart in the depths of the tomb. Live for our child; talk to him of me; you may tell him what he can not understand, that I should have loved him much. Despite my execution, I believe there is a God. My blood will wash out my sins, the weakness of my humanity; and whatever I have possessed of good, my virtues and my love of liberty, God will recompense it. I shall see you again one day.

"O my Lucile, sensitive as I was, the death which delivers me from the sight of so much crime, is it so great a misfortune? Adieu, my life, my soul, my divinity upon earth! Adieu, Lucile! my Lucile! my dear Lucile! Adieu, Horace! Annette! Adèle! Adieu, my father! I feel the shore of life fly before me. I still see Lucile! I see her, my best beloved! my Lucile! My bound hands embrace you, and my severed head rests still upon you its dying eyes."

As Danton re-entered the gloomy corridor of the prison he said, "It was just a year ago that I was instrumental in instituting the Revolutionary Tribunal. I beg pardon of God and men. I intended it as a measure of humanity, to prevent the renewal of the September massacres, and that no man should suffer without trial. I did not mean that it should prove the scourge of humanity."

Then, pressing his capacious brow between his hands, he said, "They think that they can do without me. They deceive themselves. I was the statesman of Europe. They do not suspect the void which this head leaves."

"As to me," he continued, in cynical terms, "I have enjoyed my moments of existence well. I have made plenty of noise upon earth. I have tasted well of life. Let us go to sleep," and he made a gesture with head and arms as if about to repose his head upon a pillow.

After a short pause he resumed, "We are sacrificed to the ambition of a few dastardly brigands. But they will not long enjoy the fruit of their villainy. I drag Robespierre after me. Robespierre follows me to the grave." At four o'clock the executioners entered the Conciergerie to bind their hands and cut off their hair.

"It will be very amusing," said Danton, "to the fools who will gape at us in the streets, but we shall appear otherwise in the eyes of posterity."

When the executioners laid hold of Camille Desmoulins, he struggled in the most desperate resistance. But he was speedily thrown upon the floor and bound, while the prison resounded with his shrieks and imprecations. The whole fourteen Dantonists were placed in one cart. Desmoulins seemed frantic with terror. He looked imploringly upon the crowd, and incessantly cried,

> "Save me, generous people! I am Camille Desmoulins. It was I who called you to arms on the 14th of July. It was I who gave

you the national cockade."

He so writhed and twisted in the convulsions of his agony that his clothes were nearly torn from his back. Danton stood in moody silence, occasionally endeavoring to appease the turbulence of Desmoulins.

Herault de Séchelles first ascended the scaffold. As he alighted from the cart he endeavored to embrace Danton. The brutal executioner interposed.

"Wretch," said Danton, "you will not, at least, prevent our heads from kissing presently in the basket."

Desmoulins followed next. In his hand he held a lock of his wife's hair. For an instant he gazed upon the blade, streaming with the blood of his friend, and then said, turning to the populace,

> "Look at the end of the first apostle of liberty. The monsters who murder me will not survive me long."

The axe fell, and his head dropped into the basket. Danton looked proudly, imperturbably on as, one after another, the heads of his thirteen companions fell. He was the last to ascend the scaffold. For a moment he was softened as he thought of his wife.

"Oh my wife, my dear wife," said he, "shall I never see you again?" Then checking himself, he said, "But, Danton, no weakness." Turning to the executioner, he proudly remarked, "You will show my head to the people; it will be well worth the display."

His head fell. The executioner, seizing it by the hair, walked around the platform, holding it up to the gaze of the populace. A shout of applause rose from the infatuated people. "Thus," says Mignet, "perished the last defenders of humanity and moderation, the last who sought to promote peace among the conquerors of the Revolution and pity for the conquered. For a long time after them no voice was raised against the dictatorship of terror, and from one end of France to the other it struck silent and redoubled blows. The Girondists had sought to prevent this violent reign, the Dantonists to stop it. All perished, and the conquerors had the more victims to strike, the more the foes arose around them."

The Robespierrians, having thus struck down the leaders of the moderate party, pursued their victory, by crushing all of the advocates of moderation from whom they apprehended the slightest danger. Day after day the guillotine ran red with blood. Even the devoted wife of Camille Desmoulins, but twenty-three years of age, was not spared. It was her crime that she loved her husband, and that she might excite sympathy for his fate. Resplendent with grace and beauty, she was dragged before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Little Horace was left an orphan, to cry in his cradle. Lucile displayed heroism upon the scaffold unsurpassed by that of Charlotte Corday or Madame Roland. When condemned to death she said calmly to her judges,

> "I shall, then, in a few hours, again meet my husband. In departing from this world, in which nothing now remains to engage my affections, I am far less the object of pity than are you."

Robespierre had been the intimate friend of Desmoulins and Lucile. He had often eat of their bread and drunk of their cup in social converse. He was a guest at their wedding. Madame Duplessis, the mother of Lucile, was one of the most beautiful and accomplished women of France. In vain she addressed herself to Robespierre and all his friends, in almost frantic endeavors to save her daughter.

INTERIOR OF THE REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL.

"Robespierre," she wrote to him, "is it not enough to have assassinated your best friend; do you desire also the blood of his wife, of my daughter? Your master, Fouquier Tinville, has just ordered her to be led to the scaffold. Two hours more and she will not be in existence. Robespierre, if you are not a tiger in human shape, if the blood of Camille has not inebriated you to the point of losing your reason entirely, if you recall still our evenings of intimacy, if you recall to yourself the caresses you lavished upon the little Horace, and how you delighted to hold him upon your knees, and if you remember that you were to have been my son-in-law, spare an innocent victim! But, if thy fury is that of a lion, come and take us also, myself, Adèle [her other daughter], and Horace. Come and tear us away with thy hands still reeking in the blood of Camille. Come, come, and let one single tomb reunite us."

To this appeal Robespierre returned no reply. Lucile was left to her fate. In the same car of the condemned with Madame Hebert she was conducted to the guillotine. She had dressed herself for the occasion with remarkable grace. A white gauze veil, partially covering her luxuriant hair, embellished her marvelous beauty. With alacrity and apparent cheerfulness she ascended the steps, placed her head upon the fatal plank, and a smile was upon her lips as the keen-edged knife, with the rapidity of the lightning's stroke, severed her head from her body.

While these cruel scenes were transpiring in Paris, and similar scenes in all parts of France, the republican armies on the frontiers were struggling to repel the invading armies of allied Europe. It was the fear that internal enemies would rise and combine with the foreign foe which goaded the Revolutionists to such measures of desperation. They knew that the triumph of the Bourbons was their certain death. The English were now in possession of Toulon, the arsenal of the French navy, which had been treasonably surrendered to an English fleet by the friends of the Bourbons. A republican army had for some months been besieging the city, but had made no progress toward the expulsion of the invaders.

Napoleon Bonaparte, then a young man about twenty-five years of age and a lieutenant in the army, was sent to aid the besiegers. His genius soon placed him in command of the artillery. With almost superhuman energy, and skill never before surpassed, he pressed the siege, and, in one of the most terrific midnight attacks which ever has been witnessed, drove the British from the soil of France. This is the first time that Napoleon appears as an actor in the drama of the Revolution. The achievement gave him great renown in the army. On this occasion the humanity of Napoleon was as conspicuous as his energy. He abhorred alike the tyrannic sway of the Bourbons and the sanguinary rule of the Jacobins. One of the deputies of the Convention wrote to Carnot, then Minister of War, "I send you a young man who distinguished himself very much during the siege, and earnestly recommend you to advance him speedily. If you do not, he will most assuredly advance himself."

At St. Helena Napoleon said, "I was a very warm and sincere Republican at the commencement of the Revolution. I cooled by degrees, in proportion as I acquired more just and solid ideas. My patriotism sank

under the political absurdities and monstrous domestic excesses of our legislatures."[418]

FOOTNOTES:

411. "Few victims ever met with viler executioners; few executioners with so exulted a victim. Shame at the foot of the scaffold, glory above, and pity every where. One blushes to be a man in contemplating this people. One glories in this title in contemplating Bailly."—*Lamartine, Hist. Gir.*, vol. iii., p. 282.

412. In Parl. Hist., "I would not *debauch* my humanity."

413. History of Civilization in England, by Henry Thomas Buckle, vol. i., p. 338.

414. Hebert was a low fellow, impudent, ignorant, and corrupt, and connected with one of the theatres in Paris. He was an ardent Jacobin, and established a paper called "Father Duchesne," which, from its ribaldry, was eagerly sought for by the populace. He was one of the leaders of the prison massacres on the 10th of August. His paper was the zealous advocate of atheism. He it was who brought the disgusting charge against the queen that she had endeavored to pollute her own son, and had committed incest with him, a child of eight years. Robespierre even was indignant at the foul accusation, and exclaimed, "Madman! was it not enough for him to have asserted that she was a Messalina, without also making an Agrippina of her?"—*Biographie Moderne.*

415. In this celebrated pamphlet, the "Old Cordelier," Desmoulins thus powerfully describes France, while pretending to describe Rome under the emperors: "Every thing, under that terrible government, was made the groundwork of suspicion. Does a citizen avoid society and live retired by his fireside? That is to ruminate in private on sinister designs. Is he rich? That renders the danger greater that he will corrupt the citizens by his largesses. Is he poor? None so dangerous as those who have nothing to lose. Is he thoughtful and melancholy? He is revolving what he calls the calamities of his country. Is he gay and dissipated? He is concealing, like Cæsar, ambition under the mask of pleasure. The natural death of a celebrated man has become so rare that historians transmit it, as a matter worthy of record, to future ages. The tribunals, once the protectors of life and property, have become the mere organs of butchery."

Speaking of Hebert, he said, "Hebert, the head of this turbulent and atrocious faction, is a miserable intriguer, a caterer for the guillotine, a traitor paid by Pitt, a thief expelled for theft from his office of check-taker at a theatre."—*Le Vieux Cordelier.*

416. Rioufle, p. 67.

417. Mignet, p. 245.

418. Napoleon at St. Helena, p. 125.

Chapter XXXVI.
Fall of Robespierre

Table of Contents

> Inexplicable Character of Robespierre.—Cécile Regnault.—Fête in honor of the Supreme Being.—Increase of Victims.—The Triumvirate.—Suspicions of Robespierre.—Struggle between Robespierre and the Committee of Public Safety.—Conspiracy against Robespierre.—Session of the 27th of July.—Robespierre and his Friends arrested.—Efforts to save Robespierre.—Peril of the Convention.—Execution of Robespierre and his Confederates.

Robespierre, who was now apparently at the height of his power, is one of the most inexplicable of men. His moral character was irreproachable; no bribes could corrupt him; he sincerely endeavored to establish a republic founded upon the basis of popular liberty and virtue; and self-aggrandizement seems never to have entered into his aims. He was not a blood-thirsty man; but was ready, with frigid mercilessness, to crush any party which stood in the way of his plans. His soul appears to have been almost as insensible to any generous emotion as was the blade of the guillotine.[419] He seems to have mourned the apparent necessity of beheading Danton. Repeatedly he was heard to say, perhaps hypocritically,

> "Oh, if Danton were but honest! If he were but a true Republican! What would I not give for the lantern of Diogenes to read the heart of Danton, and learn if he be the friend or the enemy of the Republic?"

Robespierre would gladly have received the aid of Danton's powerful arm, but, finding his old friend hostile to his measures, he pitilessly sent him to the guillotine. And yet there is evidence that he at times was very weary of that work of death which he deemed it necessary to prosecute.[420]

"Death," said he, "always death; and the scoundrels throw all the responsibility upon me. What a memory shall I leave behind me if this lasts! Life is a burden to me."

On the 7th of May, 1794, Robespierre made a very eloquent speech in the Convention advocating the doctrines of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul. He presented the following decrees, which were adopted by acclamation:

> "*Art. 1.* The French people recognize the existence of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul.
>
> "*Art. 2.* They acknowledge that the worship worthy of the Supreme Being is one of the duties of man."

There were some unavailing attempts now made to assassinate Robespierre; one, very singular in its character, by a beautiful girl, Cécile Regnault, but seventeen years of age. She called at Robespierre's house and asked to see him. Her appearance attracted suspicion, and she was arrested. In her basket a change of clothes was found and two knives. She was led before the Tribunal.

CÉCILE REGNAULT ARRESTED.

"What was the object of your visit to Robespierre?" the president inquired.

"I wished," she replied, "to see what a tyrant was like."

"Why did you provide yourself with the change of clothes?"

"Because," she calmly replied, "I expected to be sent to prison and then to the guillotine."

"Did you intend to stab Robespierre?"

"No," she answered, "I never wished to hurt any one in my life."

"Why are you a Royalist?" the president continued.

"Because," she replied, "I prefer one king to sixty tyrants."

She was sent to the guillotine with all her family relations. The conduct of this girl is quite inexplicable, and it is doubted whether she seriously contemplated any crime. When she called to see Robespierre *she left her knife in her room in a basket*! Eight carts were filled with victims to avenge this crime.[421]

Robespierre was now so popular with the multitude that all Paris rallied around him with congratulations.

The 8th of May was appointed as a festival in honor of the Supreme Being. Robespierre, the originator of the movement, was chosen President of the Convention, that he might take the most conspicuous part on the occasion. The morning dawned with unusual splendor. For that one day the guillotine was ordered to rest. An amphitheatre was erected in the centre of the garden of the Tuileries, and the spacious grounds were crowded with a rejoicing concourse. The celebrated painter David had arranged the fête with the highest embellishments of art. At twelve o'clock Robespierre ascended a pavilion and delivered a discourse.

"Republican Frenchmen," said he, "the ever fortunate day which the French people dedicated to the Supreme Being has at length arrived. Never did the world which he created exhibit a spectacle so worthy of his attention. He has beheld tyranny, crime, and imposture reigning on earth. He beholds at this moment a whole nation, assailed by all the oppressors of mankind, suspending the course of its heroic labors to lift its thoughts and its prayers toward the Supreme Being who gave it the mission to undertake and the courage to execute them."

Having finished his brief address, he descended and set fire to a colossal group of figures representing Atheism, Discord, and Selfishness, which the idea of a God was to reduce to ashes. As they were consumed,

there appeared in their place, emerging from the flames, the statue of Wisdom. After music, songs, and sundry symbolic ceremonies, an immense procession was formed, headed by Robespierre, which proceeded from the Tuileries to the Champ de Mars. Here, after the performance of pageants as imposing as Parisian genius could invent and Parisian opulence execute, the procession returned to the Tuileries, where the festival was concluded with public diversions.[422]

The pre-eminence which Robespierre assumed on this occasion excited great displeasure, and many murmurs reached his ears. Robespierre, the next day, entered complaints against those who had murmured, accused them of being Dantonists and enemies of the Revolution, and wished to send them to the guillotine. Each member of the Convention began to feel that his head was entirely at the disposal of Robespierre, and gradually became emboldened to opposition.

The legal process by which victims were arrested and sent to the guillotine had now become simple and energetic in the extreme. Any man complained to the Committee of Public Safety of whom he would, as *suspected* of being unfriendly to the Revolution. The committee immediately ordered the arrest of the accused. The eighteen prisons of Paris were thus choked with victims. Each evening Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, received from the Committee of Public Safety a list of those whom he was to take the next day to the Revolutionary Tribunal. If the committee, for any reason, had not prepared a list, Fouquier Tinville was allowed to select whom he pleased. To be *suspected* was almost certain death. From the commencement of this year (1794) the executions had increased with frightful rapidity. In January eighty-three were executed; in February, seventy-five; in March, one hundred and twenty-three; in April, two hundred and sixty-three; in May, three hundred and twenty-four; in June, six hundred and seventy-two; in July, eight hundred and thirty-five.[423]

Carts were continually passing from the gates of the Conciergerie loaded with prisoners, who were promptly condemned and sent immediately to the scaffold. Malesherbes, the intrepid and venerable defender of Louis XVI., living in retirement in the country, was dragged, with all his family, to the scaffold. If a man were rich, he was suspected of

aristocracy and was sent to the guillotine. If he were learned, his celebrity exposed him to suspicion, and his doom was death. If he were virtuous, he was accused of sympathy for the victims of the guillotine, and was condemned to the scaffold. There was no longer safety but in vice and degradation. The little girls who had been led by their fathers to attend a ball given by the King of Prussia at Verdun were all arrested, brought to Paris, and condemned and executed. "The eldest," says Lamartine, "was eighteen. They were all clothed in white robes. The cart which carried them resembled a basket of lilies whose heads waved to the motion of the arm. The affected executioners wept with them." Josephine Beauharnais, afterward the bride of Napoleon, was at this time in one of the dungeons of Paris, sleeping upon a wretched pallet of straw, and expecting daily to be led to execution.

Robespierre, St. Just, and Couthon were the three leading men in the Committee of Public Safety, and were hence called the Triumvirate. All began now to be weary of blood, and yet no one knew how to stem the torrent or when the carnage would cease. The Reign of Terror had become almost as intolerable as the tyranny of the old kings, but not fully so; the Reign of Terror crushed thousands who could make their woes heard; despotism crushed *millions* who were dumb. There was no hope for France but in some energetic arm which, assuming the dictatorship, should rescue liberty from the encroachments of kings and from being degraded by the mob. Robespierre was now the most prominent man in France and the most popular with the multitude. His friends urged him to assume the dictatorship.

Jealousy of Robespierre's ambition now began to arise, and his enemies rapidly increased. Whispers that he had become a traitor to the Republic and was seeking kingly power began to circulate. Popular applause is proverbially fickle. Robespierre soon found that he could not carry his measures in the Committee of Public Safety, and, disgusted and humiliated, he absented himself from the sittings. He attempted to check the effusion of blood, but was overruled by those even more pitiless than himself. He now determined to crush the committee. Political defeat was death. He must either send the committee to the scaffold or bow his own head beneath the knife. It was a death-struggle short and decisive. Pretended lists were circulated of the heads Robespierre demanded. Many

in the Convention were appalled. Secret nightly councils were held to array a force against him. The mob of Paris he could command. Henriot, the chief of the military force, was entirely subservient to his will. He reigned supreme and without a rival in the Jacobin Club. His power was apparently resistless. But despair nerved his foes.

Three very able men, accustomed to command—Tallien, Barras, and Fréron—headed the conspiracy against Robespierre. The party thus organized was called the *Thermidorien*, because it was in the month of Thermidor (July) that they achieved their signal victory, and, trampling upon the corpse of Robespierre and of his adherents, ascended to power. But nearly all these men, of all these parties, seem to have had no sense whatever of responsibility to God, or of Christianity as the rule of life. They had one and all rejected the Gospel of our Savior, and had accepted human philosophy alone as their guide. They were men, many of them, great in ability, illustrious in many virtues, sincerely loving their country, and too proud to allow themselves to be degraded by bribes or plunder. As the general on the battle-field will order movements which will cut down thousands of men, thus did these Revolutionists, without any scruples of conscience, send hundreds daily to the guillotine, not from love of blood, but because they believed that the public welfare demanded the sacrifice. And yet there was a cowardly spirit impelling these massacres. No one dared speak a word in behalf of mercy, lest he should be deemed in sympathy with aristocrats. He alone was safe from suspicion who was merciless in denunciation of the suspected. It is, however, remarkable that nearly all the actors in these scenes of blood, even in the hour of death, protested their conscientiousness and their integrity.

Robespierre was now involved in inextricable toils. He was weary of blood. The nation was becoming disgusted with such carnage.[424] He was universally recognized as the leading mind in the government, and every act was deemed his act. His enemies in the Committee of Public Safety plied the guillotine with new vigor, knowing that the public responsibility would rest on Robespierre. Robespierre was strongly opposed to that reckless massacre, and yet dared not interfere to save the condemned. His own dearest friends were arrested and dragged to the guillotine, and yet Robespierre was compelled to be silent. Earnestly he was entreated to

assume the dictatorship, and rescue France from its measureless woe. Apparently he could have done it with ease. He refused; persistently and reiteratedly refused. What were his motives none now can tell. Some say cowardice prevented him; others affirm that true devotion to the Republic forbade him. The fact alone remains; he refused the dictatorship, saying again and again, "No! no Cromwell; not even I myself."

Robespierre retired for some weeks from the Committee of Public Safety, while blood was flowing in torrents, and prepared a very elaborate discourse, to be delivered in the Convention, defending himself and assailing his foes.

On the morning of the 26th of July Robespierre appeared in the Convention, prepared to speak. His Jacobin friends, forewarned, crowded around him, and his partisans thronged the galleries. His foes were appalled, and trembled; but they rallied all their friends. It was a decisive hour, and life or death was suspended on its issues. The speech, which he read from a carefully-prepared manuscript, was long and exceedingly eloquent. His foes felt that they were crushed, and a silence as of death for a moment followed its delivery. The printing of the speech was then voted, apparently by acclamation, and the order for its transmission to all the Communes of the Republic.

The foes of Robespierre were now emboldened by despair. Their fate seemed sealed, and consequently there was nothing to be lost by any violent struggle in self-defense. Cambon ventured an attack, boldly declaring, "One single man paralyzes the National Convention, and that man is Robespierre." Others followed with more and more vigorous blows. Robespierre was amazed at the audacity. The charm of his invincibility was gone. It soon appeared that there was a strong party opposed to Robespierre, and by a large majority it was voted to revoke the resolution to print the speech.

Robespierre, mute with alarm, left the Convention, and hastened to his friends in the Club of Jacobins. He read to them the speech which the Convention had repudiated. They received it with thunders of applause and with vows of vengeance. Robespierre, fainting with exhaustion, said, in conclusion,

> "Brothers, you have heard my last will and testament. I have seen to-day that the league of villains is so strong that I can not hope to escape them. I yield without a murmur! I leave to you my memory; it will be dear to you, and you will defend it."

Many were affected even to tears, and, crowding around him, conjured him to rally his friends in an insurrection. Henriot declared his readiness to march his troops against the Convention. Robespierre, knowing that death was the inevitable doom of the defeated party, consented, saying,

> "Well, then, let us separate the wicked from the weak. Free the Convention from those who oppress it. Advance, and save the country. If in these generous efforts we fail, then, my friends, you shall see me drink hemlock calmly."

David, grasping his hand, enthusiastically exclaimed, "Robespierre, if you drink hemlock, I will drink it with you." "Yes," interrupted a multitude of voices, "all! we all will perish with you. To die with you is to die with the people."

One or two of Robespierre's opponents had followed him from the Convention to the Hall of the Jacobins. Couthon pointed them out and denounced them. The Jacobins fell upon them and drove them out of the house wounded and with rent garments. With difficulty they escaped with their lives. Robespierre witnessed this violence, and dreading the effects of a general insurrection, withdrew his consent to adopt means so lawless and desperate. He probably felt that, strongly supported as he was, he would be able the next day to triumph in the Convention.

"At this refusal," says Lamartine, "honest, perhaps, but impolitic, Coffinhal, taking Payan by the arm and leading him out of the room, said,

> "'You see plainly that his virtue could not consent to insurrection. Well! since he will not be saved, let us prepare to defend ourselves and to avenge him.'"

The night was passed by both parties in preparing for the decisive strife of the next day. The friends of Robespierre were active in concerting, in all the quarters of Paris, a rising of the people to storm the Convention. Tallien, Barras, Fréron, Fouché, slept not. They were informed of all that had passed at the Jacobins, and their emissaries brought them hourly intelligence through the night of the increasing tumult of the people. They made vigorous preparations for the debate within the walls and for the defense of the doors against the forest of pikes with which it was about to be assailed. Barras was intrusted with the military defense. It was resolved that Robespierre should be cried down and denounced by internal tumult and not permitted to speak. Each party, not knowing the strength of its opponents, was sanguine of success.

The morning of the 27th of July dawned, and as Robespierre entered the Convention, attired with unusual care, and with a smile of triumph upon his lips, silence and stillness reigned through the house. St. Just, in behalf of Robespierre, commenced the onset. A scene of tumult immediately ensued of which no adequate description can be given. Robespierre immediately saw that his friends were far outnumbered by his foes, and was in despair. Pale and excited, he attempted to ascend the tribune. Tallien seized by the coat and dragged him away, while cries of *Down with the tyrant* filled the house.[425]

"Just now," shouted Tallien, taking the tribune from which he had ejected Robespierre, "I demanded that the curtain should be withdrawn; it is so; the conspirators are unmasked and liberty will triumph. Up to this moment I had preserved utter silence because I was aware that the tyrant had made a list of proscriptions. But I was present at the sitting of the Jacobins. I beheld the formation of the army of this second Cromwell, and I armed myself with this poniard, with which to pierce his heart if the National Convention had not the courage to order his arrest."

ROBESPIERRE ATTEMPTING HIS DEFENSE.

With these words he drew a dagger and pointed it menacingly at the breast of Robespierre. At the same time he moved the arrest of Henriot and others of the leading men of that party. The motion was tumultuously carried. In vain Robespierre attempted to gain a hearing. Cries of "Down with the tyrant" filled the house, and menaces, reproaches, and insults were heaped upon him without measure. The wretched man, overwhelmed by the clamor, turned pale with indignation, and shouted "President of assassins, will you hear me?" "No! no! no!" seemed to be the unanimous response. In the midst of the uproar Louchet moved the arrest of Robespierre. The proposition was received with thunders of applause.[426] The brother of Robespierre, a young man of gentle, affectionate nature and many virtues, who was universally esteemed, now rose, and said,

> "I am as guilty as my brother. I have shared his virtues, I wish to share his fate."

Robespierre instantly interposed, saying, "I accept my condemnation. I have deserved your hatred. But, crime or virtue, my brother is not guilty of that which you strike in me."

Shouts and stamping drowned his voice. As cries of *Vive la République* rose on all sides, Robespierre quietly folded his arms, and, with a contemptuous smile, exclaimed, "The Republic! it is destroyed; for scoundrels triumph." It was now three o'clock in the afternoon. The two Robespierres, Couthon, St. Just, and Lebus were led by *gens d'armes* from the Convention across the Place du Carrousel to the Hôtel de Brionne, where the Committee of General Safety were in session. A crowd followed the prisoners with derision and maledictions. As they entered the Carrousel a procession of carts, containing forty-five victims on their way to the guillotine, met them.

After a very brief examination Robespierre was sent to the Luxembourg. His confederates were distributed among the other prisons of Paris. The Mayor of Paris and Henriot were in the mean time active in endeavors to excite an insurrection to rescue the prisoners. The following proclamation was issued from the Hôtel de Ville:

> "Brothers and friends! the country is in imminent danger! The wicked have mastered the Convention, where they hold in chains the virtuous Robespierre. To arms! to arms! Let us not lose the fruits of the 18th of August and the 2d of June."

Henriot, waving his sword, swore that he would drag the scoundrels who voted the arrest of Robespierre through the streets tied to the tail of his horse. This brutal man was now in such a state of intoxication as to be incapable of decisive action. Flourishing a pistol, he mounted his horse, and, with a small detachment of troops, galloped to the Luxembourg to rescue his friend. He was met on the way by the troops of the Convention, who had been ordered to arrest him. They seized him, dragged him from his horse, bound him with their belts, and threw him into a guard-house, almost dead-drunk. In the mean time the populace rescued all the

prisoners, and carried them in triumph to the mayor's room at the Hôtel de Ville. Robespierre, however, notwithstanding the most earnest entreaties of the Jacobins and the municipal government, refused to encourage or to accept the insurrection, or to make escape from arrest. "Made prisoner," writes Lamartine, "by command of his enemies, he resolved either to triumph or fall submissive to the law only; added to which, he firmly believed the Revolutionary Tribunal would acquit him of all laid to his charge; or, if not, and if even condemned to death, 'the death of one just man,' said he, 'is less hurtful to the Republic than the example of a revolt against the national representation.'"

News was brought to the Hôtel de Ville of the arrest of Henriot. Coffinhal, Vice-president of the Revolutionary Tribunal, immediately rallied the mob, rushed to the Tuileries, released Henriot, who was by this time somewhat sobered, and brought him back to the Hôtel de Ville. Henriot, exasperated by his arrest, placed himself at the head of his troops and marched with a battery against the Convention. At this stage of the affair no one could judge which party would be victorious. The city government, with the populace at its disposal, was on one side; the Convention, with its friends, on the other.[427]

It was now seven o'clock in the evening, and the deputies of the Convention, fully conscious of their peril, seemed almost speechless with terror. Robespierre and his confederates were rescued and protected by the city government; the mob was aroused, and the National Guard, under their leader, Henriot, were marching against the Convention. The Revolutionary Tribunal, which alone could condemn Robespierre, it was feared would acquit him by acclamation. He would then be led back in triumph to the Convention, and his foes would be speedily dragged to the guillotine. The dismal tolling of the tocsin now was heard; in the Jacobin Club the oath was taken to live or die with Robespierre; the rallying masses were crowding in from the faubourgs; cannon were pointed against the Convention; and three thousand young students seized their arms and rendezvoused as a body-guard for Robespierre.

In this critical hour the Convention, nerved by despair, adopted those measures of boldness and energy which could alone save them from destruction. As they were deliberating, Henriot placed his artillery before

their doors and ordered them to be blown open. The deputies remained firmly in their seats, saying, "Here is our post, and here we will die." The friends of the Convention, who crowded the galleries, rushed out and spread themselves through the streets to rally defenders for the laws. Several of the deputies also left the hall, threw themselves among the soldiers, and, remonstrating with them, pointed to Henriot, and said,

> "Soldiers! look at that drunken man! who but a drunkard would ever point his arms against his country or its representatives? Will you, who have ever deserved so much from your country, cast shame and dishonor on her now?"

DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE CONVENTION, HEADED BY HENRIOT.

The Convention had outlawed Henriot and appointed Barras to the command of the National Guard in his place. The soldiers began to waver. Henriot, affrighted, put spurs to his horse and fled. Barras, an energetic man, was now in command, and the tide had thus suddenly and strongly turned in favor of the Convention. It was now night, and the gleam of ten thousand torches was reflected from the multitudes surging through the streets. Barras, on horseback, with a strong retinue, traversed the central quarters of Paris, rallying the citizens to the defense of the Convention. Eighteen hundred bold, well-armed men were soon marshaled before the doors. With two other bands he marched along parallel streets to the Place de Grève, where he drove off the disorderly crowd and secured all the approaches to the Hôtel de Ville. Robespierre was still in one of the rooms of the Hôtel de Ville, surrounded by his confederates and by the members of the city government. They implored him to authorize an insurrection, assuring him that his name would rally the populace and rescue them all from inevitable death. But Robespierre persistently refused, declaring that he would rather die than violate the laws established by the people.

A detachment of soldiers, sent by Barras, cautiously ascended the steps, and entered the *Salle de l'Egalité* to rearrest the rescued prisoners. As they were ascending the stairs Lebas discharged a pistol into his heart and fell dead. The younger Robespierre leaped from the window into the court-yard, breaking his leg by his fall. Coffinhal, enraged in contemplating the ruin into which the drunken imbecility of Henriot had involved them, seized him and threw him out of a window of the second story upon a pile of rubbish, exclaiming,

> "Lie there, wretched drunkard! You are not worthy to die on a scaffold!"

Robespierre sat calmly at a table, awaiting his fate. One of the *gens d'armes* discharged a pistol at him. The ball entered his left cheek, fracturing his jaw and carrying away several of his teeth. His head dropped upon the table, deluging with blood the papers which were before him. The troops of the Convention now filled the Hôtel de Ville, arresting all its inmates. The day was just beginning to dawn as the long file of prisoners

were led out into the Place de Grève to be conducted to the hall of the Convention.[428]

First came Robespierre, borne by four men on a litter. His fractured jaw was bound up by a handkerchief, which was steeped in blood. Couthon was paralytic in his limbs. Unable to walk, he was also carried in the arms of several men. They had carelessly let him fall, and his clothes were torn, disarranged, and covered with mud. Robespierre the younger, stunned by his fall and with his broken limb hanging helplessly down, was conveyed insensible in the arms of two men. The corpse of Lebas was borne next in this sad train, covered with a table-cloth spotted with his blood. Then followed St. Just, bareheaded, with dejected countenance, his hands bound behind him. Upward of eighty members of the city government, bound two and two, completed the melancholy procession.

It was five o'clock in the morning when the captives were led to the Tuileries. In the mean time Légendre had marched to the assembly-room of the Jacobins, dispersed them, locked their doors, and brought the keys to the President of the Convention.[429]

Robespierre was laid upon a table in an anteroom, while an interminable crowd pressed in and around to catch a sight of the fallen dictator. The unhappy man was overwhelmed with reproaches and insults, and feigned death to escape this moral torture. The blood was freely flowing from his wound, coagulating in his mouth, and choking him as it trickled down his throat. The morning was intensely hot; not a breath of pure air could the wounded man inhale; insatiable thirst and a burning fever consumed him; and thus he remained for more than an hour, enduring the intensest pangs of bodily and mental anguish. By order of the Convention, he and his confederates were then removed to the Committee of General Safety for examination; from which tribunal they were sent to the Conciergerie, where they were all thrown into the same dungeon to await their trial, which was immediately to take place before the Revolutionary Tribunal.

ROBESPIERRE LYING WOUNDED ON THE TABLE OF THE CITY HALL.

A few hours of pain, anguish, and despair passed away, when at three o'clock in the afternoon the whole party were conveyed to that merciless court which was but the last stepping-stone to death. The trial lasted but a few moments. They were already condemned, and it was only necessary to prove their identity. The Convention was victorious, and no man of the Revolutionary Tribunal dared to resist its will. Had the Commune of Paris conquered in this strife, the obsequious Tribunal, with equal alacrity, would have consigned the Deputies to the guillotine.

At five o'clock the carts of the condemned received the prisoners.[430] The long procession advanced through the Rue St. Honoré to the Place de la Révolution. The fickle crowd thronged the streets, heaping imprecations upon the man to whom they would have shouted hosanna had he been a victor. Robespierre, his brother, Couthon, Henriot, all mangled, bleeding, and with broken bones, were thrown into the first cart with the corpse of Lebas. As the cart jolted over the pavement shrieks of anguish were extorted from the victims. At six o'clock they reached the steps of the

guillotine. Robespierre ascended the scaffold with a firm step; but, as the executioner brutally tore the bandage from his inflamed wound, he uttered a shriek of torture which pierced every ear. The dull sullen sound of the falling axe was heard, and the head of Robespierre fell ghastly into the basket. For a moment there was silence, and then the crowd raised a shout as if a great victory had been achieved and the long-sought blessings of the Revolution attained.[431]

ROBESPIERRE AND HIS COMPANIONS LED TO EXECUTION.

Thus died Robespierre, in the thirty-fifth year of his age. His character will probably ever remain a mystery. "His death was the date and not the cause of the cessation of terror. Deaths would have ceased by his triumphs, as they did by his death. Thus did Divine justice dishonor his repentance, and cast misfortune on his good intentions, making of his tomb a gulf filled up. It has made of his memory an enigma of which history trembles to pronounce the solution, fearing to do him injustice if she brand it as a

crime, or to create horror if she should term it a virtue. This man was, and must ever remain, shadowy and undefined."[432]

Twenty-two were beheaded with Robespierre. The next day seventy who were arrested at the Hôtel de Ville were sent to the guillotine. The following day twelve more bled upon the scaffold. In three days one hundred and fourteen perished, untried, by that tyranny which had supplanted the tyranny of Robespierre.[433]

FOOTNOTES:

419. "Mr. Alison gives currency to an atrocious slander against Robespierre, for which he has adduced no authority, and which is contradicted by the whole evidence of Robespierre's life. 'He (Philippe Egalité) was detained,' says Alison, 'above a quarter of an hour in front of the Palais Royal, by order of Robespierre, who had asked in vain for the hand of his daughter in marriage, and had promised, if he would relent in that extremity, to excite a tumult which would save his life.'"—*Life of Robespierre, by G.H. Lewes*, p. 265.

420. "Danton regarded the austere principles of Robespierre as folly. He thought that the Republicans could not maintain their power but by surrounding themselves with the consideration which wealth confers, and he consequently thought it necessary to close their eyes against the sudden acquisition of wealth of certain Revolutionists. Robespierre, on the contrary, flattered himself that he could establish a republic in France based on virtue, and when he was thoroughly persuaded that Danton was an obstacle to that system he abandoned him."—*Biographie Universelle.*

421. Du Broca.

422. "Robespierre had a prodigious force at his disposal. The lowest orders, who saw the Revolution in his person, supported him as the best representative of its doctrines and interests; the armed force of Paris, commanded by Henriot, was at his command. He had entire sway over the Jacobins, whom he admitted and ejected at pleasure; all important posts were occupied by his creatures; he had formed the Revolutionary Tribunal and the new committee himself."—*Mignet*, p. 256.

423. Thiers, vol. iii., p. 68, note from Quarterly Review.

424. Prudhomme, a Republican, who wrote during this period of excitement, has left six volumes of the details of the Reign of Terror. Two of these contain an alphabetical list of all the persons put to death by the Revolutionary Tribunals. He gives the following appalling statement of the victims:

Nobles	1,278
Noble women	750
Wives of laborers and artisans	1,467
Nuns	350

Priests	1,135	
Men not noble	13,623	
Total sent to the guillotine	18,603	18,603
Women who died of premature delivery		3,400
Women who died in childbirth from grief		348
Women killed in La Vendée		15,000
Children killed in La Vendée		22,000
Men slain in La Vendée		900,000
Victims under Carrier at Nantes		32,000
Victims at Lyons		31,000
Total		1,022,351

This list, appalling as it is, does not include those massacred in the prisons, or those shot at Toulon or Marseilles.

425. The full report of this terrible scene, as contained in the Moniteur of the 11th Thermidor, is one of the most exciting narratives in history. In the conflict Robespierre appears immeasurably superior to his opponents in dignity and argument. But he is overwhelmed and crushed by the general clamor. He struggles valiantly, and falls like a strong man armed.

426. "In the height of the terrible conflict, when Robespierre seemed deprived by rage of the power of articulation, a voice cried out, '*It is Danton's blood that is choking you*.' Robespierre, indignant, recovered his voice and courage to exclaim, 'Danton! Is it, then, Danton you regret? Cowards! why did you not defend him?' There was spirit, truth, and even dignity in this bitter retort—the last words that Robespierre ever spoke in public."—*Quarterly Review.*

427. The state of the times is illustrated by the fact that Barrere is reported to have gone to the Convention with two speeches in his pocket, one assailing Robespierre and the other defending him. He knew not which party would triumph, and he was prepared to join the strongest.

428. Though it has generally been represented that Robespierre attempted to commit suicide, the evidence now seems to be conclusive that he did not. See Lamartine's History of the Girondists, vol. iii., p. 527.

429. Légendre, the butcher, was a deputy of the Convention. He was a man of extraordinary nerve, and had been one of the most furious members of the society of Jacobins.—*Biog. Universelle.*

430. There is some confusion respecting the dates of these events; but we follow the dates as given by Lamartine.

431. "Robespierre," said Napoleon, "was by no means the worst character who figured in the Revolution. He opposed trying the queen. He was not an atheist; on the contrary, he had publicly maintained the existence of a Supreme Being in opposition to many of his

colleagues. Neither was he of opinion that it was necessary to exterminate all priests and nobles, like many others. Marat, for example, maintained that it was necessary that six hundred thousand heads should fall. Robespierre wanted to proclaim the king an outlaw, and not to go through the ridiculous mockery of trying him. Robespierre was a fanatic, a monster, but he was incorruptible, and incapable of robbing or causing the deaths of others either from personal enmity or a desire of enriching himself. He was an enthusiast, but one who really believed that he was acting right, and died not worth a sou. In some respects Robespierre may be said to have been an honest man."—*Napoleon at St. Helena*, p. 590.

Chapter XXXVII.
The Thermidorians and the Jacobins

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The fall of Robespierre was hailed with general enthusiasm, for he was believed to be the chief instigator of that carnage which, in reality, at the time of his fall, he was struggling to repress. There were now in the Convention the headless remains of four parties, the Girondists, Hebertists, Dantonists, and Robespierrians. The able leaders of all these parties had, each in their turn, perished upon the scaffold. There now arose from these ruins a party, which was called, as we have before remarked, *Thermidorians*, from the month Thermidor (*July*), in which its supremacy commenced. A new government was immediately and noiselessly evolved, the result of necessity. The extreme concentration of power in the Committee of Public Safety, over which Robespierre had been supposed to rule as a dictator, was now succeeded by a dissemination of power, wide and ineffective. Sixteen committees became the executive of France; one Assembly its legislative power. These committees were composed of members numbering from twelve to fifty. The Committee of Public Welfare contained twelve, and superintended military and diplomatic operations; that of General Safety sixteen, and had the direction of the police; that of Finance forty-eight. Such was the new government, under which, after the fall of Robespierre, the Republic struggled along.

The horrors of the Reign of Terror were now producing a decided reaction. Many of the young men of Paris, who abhorred the past scenes of

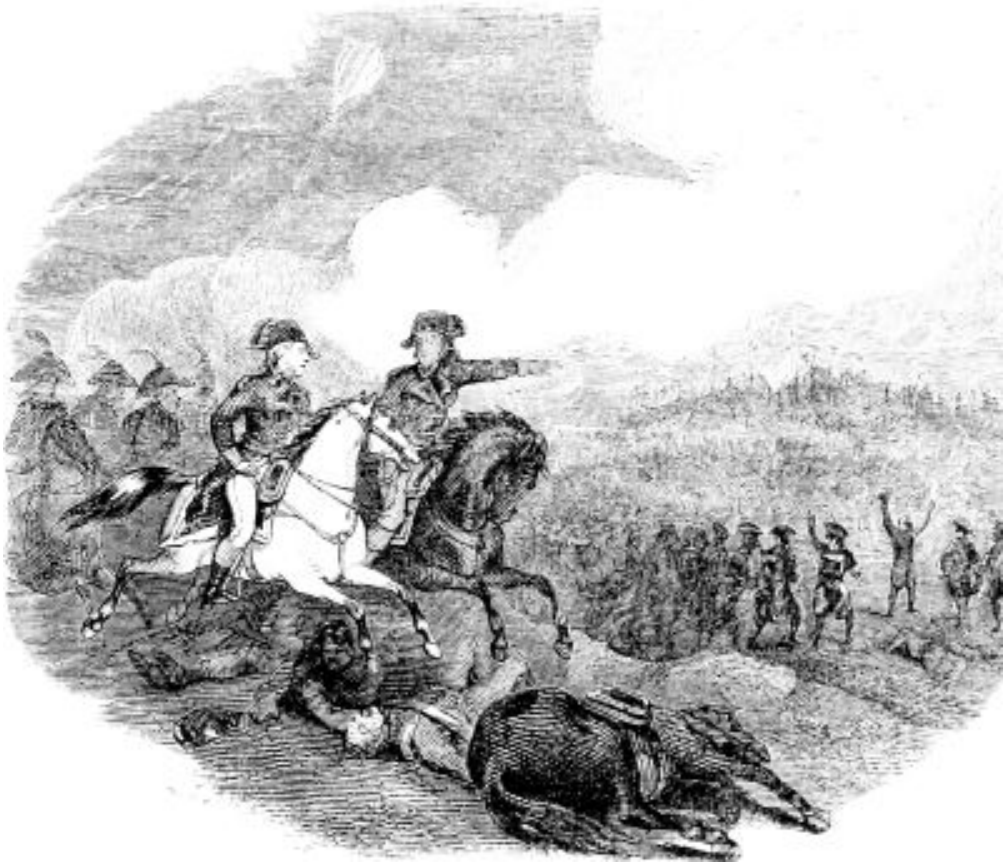
violence, organized themselves into a band called the Jeunesse Dorée, or Gilded Youth, and commenced vigorous opposition to the Jacobins. They wore a distinctive dress, and armed themselves with a short club loaded with lead. Frequent conflicts took place in the streets between the two parties, in which the Jeunesse Dorée were generally victorious. The Terrorists having become unpopular, and being in the decided minority, the guillotine was soon allowed to rest. Mercy rapidly succeeded cruelty. The captives who crowded the prisons of Paris were gradually liberated, and even the Revolutionary Tribunal was first modified and then abolished.

APOTHEOSIS OF ROUSSEAU, OCTOBER 11, 1794.

The reaction was so strong, annulling past decrees, liberating suspected Loyalists, and punishing violent Revolutionists, that even many of the true friends of popular rights were alarmed lest the nation should drift back again under the sway of old feudal despotism. M. Fréron, in the following terms, moved, in the Convention, an act of accusation against the execrable Fouquier Tinville, who had been public accuser:

> "I demand that the earth be at length delivered from that monster, and that Fouquier be sent to hell, there to wallow in the blood he has shed."

The decree was passed by acclamation. In the space of eight or ten days after the fall of Robespierre, out of ten thousand suspected persons not one remained in the prisons of Paris.[434] For many weeks nothing of moment occurred in the Convention but the petty strife of factions. On the 11th of October the remains of Rousseau were transferred to the Pantheon with all the accompaniments of funeral pageantry. They were deposited by the side of the remains of Voltaire. Upon his tomb were inscribed the words, "Here reposes the man of nature and of truth."



BATTLE OF FLEURUS.

About a month before the fall of Robespierre, on the 26th of June, the celebrated battle of Fleurus was fought. The sanguinary engagement extended along a semicircle nearly thirty miles in extent. The French had

brought up about eighty thousand troops, to oppose an equal number of the Allies. The French, under Pichegru, were victorious at every point, and the Allies were compelled to retreat. They rallied for a short time in the vicinity of Brussels, but were soon again compelled to retire, and all Belgium fell into the hands of the Republicans.

About the middle of July two armies of the French, amounting to one hundred and fifty thousand, effected a junction in the city of Brussels. The Committee of Public Safety had passed an inhuman decree that no quarter should be given to the English. The soldiers refused obedience to this decree. A sergeant, having taken some English prisoners, brought them to an officer.

"Why did you spare their lives?" the officer inquired.

"Because," the sergeant replied, "it was saving so many shots."

"True," rejoined the officer, "but the Representatives will oblige us to shoot them."

"It is not we," retorted the sergeant, "who will shoot them. Send them to the Representatives. If they are barbarous enough, why, let them kill and eat them if they like."[435]

While the French armies were gaining these signal victories all along the Rhine, war was raging with almost equal ferocity in the ravines of the Alps and at the base of the Pyrenees, as the Republicans struggled to repel the invading hosts of Austria, England, and Spain.

The Thermidorians and the Jacobins were now the two great parties struggling for power all over France. The Thermidorians were the moderate conservative party, and the Jacobins called them Aristocrats. The Jacobins were the radical, progressive, revolutionary party, and the Thermidorians called them Terrorists. The more intelligent and reputable portion of the community were with the Thermidorians; the women, weary of turmoil and blood, were very generally with them; and the very efficient military band of young men called the *Jeunesse Dorée* (gilded youth), who belonged to the rich and middle classes, were very efficient supporters of this party, hurling defiance upon the Jacobins, and ever ready for a street fray with their clubs. The Jacobins were composed of the mob, generally headed by those vigorous, reckless, determined men who usually form what Thiers calls "the ferocious democracy." Fréron's journal, *The Orator*

of the People, was the eloquent advocate of the Thermidorians, now rising rapidly to power, and it launched incessant and merciless anathemas against the *revolutionary canaille*. The females who advocated Jacobinism were called *the furies of the guillotine*, because they had frequently formed circles around the scaffold, assailing the victims with ribald abuse. These two parties were so equally divided, and the strife was so fierce between them, that scenes of fearful uproar frequently took place not only in the Convention but throughout all France. The spirit of the Jacobins at this time may be seen in the following brief extract from a speech of Billaud Varennes:

> "People talk," said he, "of shootings and drownings, but they do not recollect that the individuals for whom they feel pity had furnished succors to the banditti. They do not recollect the cruelties perpetrated on our volunteers, who were hanged upon trees and shot in files. If vengeance is demanded for the banditti, let the families of two hundred thousand Republicans, mercilessly slaughtered, come also to demand vengeance. The course of counter-revolutionists is known. When, in the time of the Constituent Assembly, they wanted to bring the Revolution to trial, they called the Jacobins *disorganizers* and shot them in the Field of Mars. After the 2d of September, when they wanted to prevent the establishment of the Republic, they called them *quaffers of blood* and loaded them with atrocious calumnies. They are now recommencing the same machinations; but let them not expect to triumph. The Patriots have been able to keep silence for a moment, but the lion is not dead when he slumbers, and when he awakes he exterminates all his enemies. The trenches are open, the Patriots are about to rouse themselves and to resume all their energy. We have already risked our lives a thousand times. If the scaffold awaits us, let us recollect that it was the scaffold which covered the immortal Sidney with glory."

This speech, reported in the journal of the Jacobins, called the *Journal de la Montagne*, created great excitement, and gave rise to one of the

stormiest debates in the Convention. The Jacobins were accused of wishing to direct the mob against the Convention. They, on the other hand, accused the Thermidorians of releasing well-known Royalists from prison, and of thus encouraging a counter-revolution. Légendre, speaking in behalf of the Thermidorians, in reply to the Jacobins, said,

> "What have you to complain of, you who are constantly accusing us? Is it because citizens are no longer sent to prison by hundreds? because the guillotine no longer dispatches fifty, sixty, or eighty persons per day? Ah! I must confess that in this point our pleasure differs from yours, and that our manner of sweeping the prisons is not the same. We have visited them ourselves; we have made, as far as it was possible to do so, a distinction between the Aristocrats and the Patriots; if we have done wrong, here are our heads to answer for it. But while we make reparation for crimes, while we are striving to make you forget that those crimes are your own, why do you go to a notorious society to denounce us, and to mislead the people who attend there, fortunately in no great numbers? I move that the Convention take measures to prevent its members from going and preaching up rebellion at the Jacobins'."

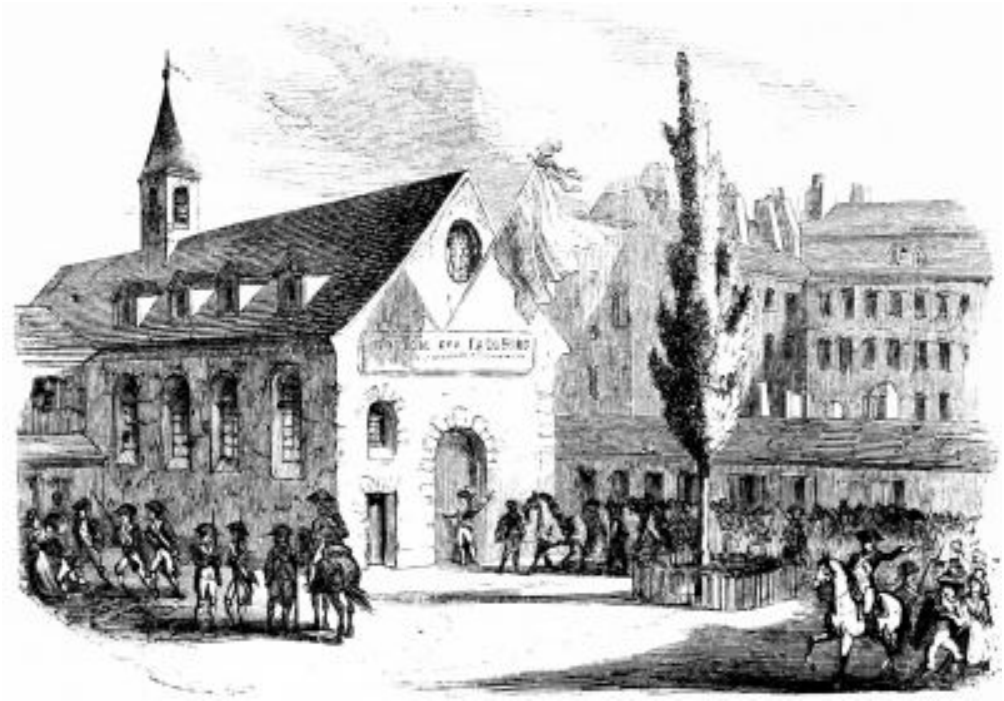
The conflict extended from the Convention into the streets, and for several days there were serious riots. Angry groups in hostile bands paraded the gardens of the Tuileries and the Palais Royal—the partisans of the Thermidorians shouting "*Down with the Terrorists and Robespierre's tail*." Their opponents shouted "*The Jacobins forever! Down with the Aristocrats!*"

On the 9th of November there was a battle between the two parties in the Rue St. Honoré, in and around the hall of the Jacobins, which lasted for several hours. A number of the women, called Furies of the Guillotine, who mingled in the fray, were caught by the *Jeunesse Dorée*, and, in defiance of all the rules of chivalry, had their clothes stripped from their backs and were ignominiously whipped. It was midnight before the

disturbance was quelled. A stormy debate ensued next day in the Convention.

"Where has tyranny," said Rewbel, "been organized? At the Jacobins'. Where has it found its supporters and satellites? At the Jacobins'. Who have covered France with mourning, carried despair into families, filled the country with prisons, and rendered the Republic so odious that a slave, pressed down by the weight of his irons, would refuse to live under it? The Jacobins. Who regret the frightful government under which we have lived? The Jacobins. If you have not now the courage to declare yourselves, you have no longer a Republic, because you have Jacobins."

Influenced by such sentiments, the Convention passed a decree "to close the door of places where factions arise and where civil war is preached."



THE CLUB-HOUSE OF THE JACOBINS CLOSED.

Thus terminated the long reign of the Jacobin Club. The act was greeted with acclaim by the general voice of France.[436]

The French, who had twelve hundred thousand men under arms, were now in possession of all the important points on the Rhine, and every where held their assailants at bay.[437] The latter part of December,

Pichegru, driving the allied Dutch, English, and Austrians before him, crossed the Meuse on the ice and entered Holland. The Republican party in Holland was numerous and detested their rulers. They immediately prepared to rise and welcome their friends, the French. In this desperate situation the Stadtholder implored a truce, offering as a condition of peace neutrality and indemnification for the expenses of the war.[438] Pichegru refused the truce; but sent the terms of peace for the consideration of the government in Paris. The proffered terms were refused, and Pichegru was ordered to press on and restore the Dutch Republic. At the head of two hundred thousand troops he spread, like a torrent, over all Holland. He was every where received with open arms and as a deliverer. The Allies, with the emigrants, fled in all directions, some by land and some by sea. A portion of the Dutch fleet, at anchor near the Texel, was frozen in by the unparalleled severity of the winter. A squadron of horse-artillery galloped across the ice and summoned it to surrender. The fleet was compelled to strike its flags to these novel assailants. On the 20th of January, 1795, Pichegru entered Amsterdam in triumph. The inhabitants crowded from the walls to meet him, shouting "*The French Republic forever! Liberty forever!*"

THE FRENCH ENTERING AMSTERDAM ON THE ICE.

Holland, organizing as the Republic of the United Provinces, on the 16th of May entered into an alliance offensive and defensive with the French Republic, to be perpetual during the continuance of the war. The two infant republics needed mutual support to resist the combined monarchies of England and the Continent.[439]

While Pichegru was gaining such victories on the Lower Rhine and in Holland, Kleber was also, on the Upper Rhine, driving the Austrians before him. He boldly crossed the river in the impetuous pursuit, and carried the horrors of war into the enemies' country. Soon, however, he was crowded with such numbers of antagonists that he was compelled, in his turn, to commence a retreat. Again, re-enforcements arriving, he assumed the offensive. Thus the tide of war ebbed and flowed.

Prussia, alarmed by these signal victories of the Republican troops, and threatened with invasion, was anxious to withdraw from the coalition. The king sent a commissioner to Pichegru's head-quarters to propose peace. The commissioners from the two countries met at Basle, and on the 5th of April a treaty of peace was signed. The French agreed to evacuate the Prussian provinces they had occupied on the right bank of the Rhine, and the Prussian monarchy agreed that there should be peace, amity, and a good understanding between the King of Prussia and the French Republic.

THE FRENCH CROSSING THE RHINE UNDER KLEBER.

Spain, also, trembling in view of the triumphant march of Dugommier through the defiles of the Pyrenees, made proposals of accommodation, promising to acknowledge the Republic and to pay indemnities for the war. Peace with the Peninsula was signed at Basle on the 12th of July. This peace, which detached a Bourbon from the coalition, was hailed throughout France with transports of joy.[440]

VICTORY OF QUIBERON.

MASSACRE IN LYONS LED BY THE PRIESTS.

England, Austria, and Naples still remained firm in their determination to crush the Republic. William Pitt led the ministry with his warlike

measures, and triumphed over the peaceful policy of Sheridan and Fox. He thus, for a quarter of a century, converted all Europe into a field of blood. Roused by the energies of Pitt, the English government organized a very formidable expedition, to be landed in La Vendée, to rouse and rally the Royalists all over France, and thus to reinvigorate the energies of civil war. A squadron was fitted out, consisting of three 74-gun ships, two frigates of 44 guns, four frigates of 30 to 36 guns, and several gun-boats and transports. This was the first division, which, as soon as it was established in France, was to be followed by another. The fleet came to anchor in the Bay of Quiberon on the 25th of June. A motley mass of about seven thousand men were speedily landed; the Royalists soon joined them, making an army of some thirteen thousand. General Hoche, who had for some time been valiantly and most humanely struggling for the pacification of La Vendée, marched to repel them. A few bloody battles ensued, in which the unhappy invaders were driven into a narrow peninsula, where, by a midnight assault, they most miserably perished. A few only escaped to the ships; many were drowned, and a large number were mercilessly put to the sword. The Convention had decreed the penalty of death to any Frenchman who should enter France with arms in his hands.

At Lyons there was a general rising of the Royalists and the reactionary party against the Revolutionists. The Royalists proved themselves not one whit behind the Jacobins in the energy with which they could push their Reign of Terror. Led by the priests, the Royalist mob broke into the prisons and murdered seventy or eighty prisoners who were accused of revolutionary violence. One prison was set on fire, and all its inmates perished miserably in the flames.

The disturbances in Lyons were soon quelled, and Hoche, having annihilated the force which the English had landed in the Bay of Quiberon, gradually succeeded in introducing tranquillity into La Vendée. Many of the Royalists came to his camp to seek terms of reconciliation with the Republic.

FOOTNOTES:

432. History of the Girondists, by Lamartine, vol. iii., p. 535.

433. "Mirabeau, Marat, Brissot, Danton, Robespierre were all heads cut off in succession; and all succeeding heads were saved only by having recourse to one head and one arm in the Emperor Napoleon."—*Life and Works of John Adams*, vol. vi., p. 547.

Though Mirabeau died a natural death, he would unquestionably have been guillotined had he lived a few months longer.

Meda, the officer of the Convention who arrested Robespierre and his associates at the Hôtel de Ville, thus describes the event: "The head of my column moved forward; a terrible noise ensued; my ten pieces of artillery were brought forward and ready; those opposed to me in like manner. I threw myself between the two lines. I flew to the cannoneers of the enemy. I spoke to them of their country; of the respect due to the national representation; in short, I do not well remember what I said, but the result was that they all came over to us. I instantly dismounted, seized my pistols, addressed myself to my grenadiers, and made for the staircase of the Hôtel de Ville." He describes the manner in which he forced his way up the stairs, broke open the door, and found about fifty people assembled in the room in great confusion. Robespierre was sitting at a table, his head leaning upon his hand. "I rushed upon him," he continues, in his narrative, "presented my sabre to his breast, 'Yield, traitor,' I cried. 'It is thou art the traitor,' he replied, 'and I will have thee shot.' I instantly drew out one of my pistols, and fired at him. I aimed at his breast, but the ball hit him about the chin, and shattered all his left jaw. He fell from his chair. At the sound of the explosion his brother threw himself through the window. The uproar was immense. I cried '*Vive la République*!'"

434. Lacretelle.

435. Thiers, vol. iii., p. 84.

436. "This popular body had powerfully served the Revolution when, in order to repel Europe, it was necessary to place the government in the multitude, and to give the Republic all the energy of defense; but now it only obstructed the new order of things."—*Mignet*, 282.

437. "At one time France had seventeen hundred thousand fighters on foot."—*Toulongeon*, vol. iii., p. 194.

438. Thiers, vol. iii., p. 186.

439. "The first act of the Representatives was to publish a proclamation, in which they declared that they would respect all private property, excepting, however, that of the Stadtholder; that the latter, being the only foe of the French Republic, his property belonged to the conquerors as an indemnification for the expenses of the war; that the French entered as friends of the Batavian nation, not to impose upon it any religion or any form of government whatever, but to deliver it from its oppressors, and to confer upon it the means of expressing its wishes. This proclamation, followed up by corresponding acts, produced a most favorable impression."—*Thiers*, vol. iii., p. 184.

440. "Tuscany, forced, in spite of herself, to give up her neutrality by the English ambassador, who, threatening her with an English squadron, had allowed her but twelve hours to decide, was impatient to resume her part, especially since the French were at the gates of Genoa. Good understanding and friendship were re-established between the two states."—*Thiers*, vol. iii., p. 230.

Chapter XXXVIII.
Dissolution of the Convention

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Famine in Paris.—Strife between the Jeunesse Dorée and the Jacobins.—Riots.—Scene in the Convention.—War with the Allies.—A new Constitution.—Insurrection of the Sections.—Energy of General Bonaparte.—Discomfiture of the Sections.—Narrative of the Duchess of Abrantes.—Clemency of the Convention.—Its final Acts and Dissolution, and Establishment of the Directory.

Let us return to Paris. The unprecedented severity of the winter had caused fearful suffering among the populace of Paris. The troubled times had broken up all the ordinary employments of peace. The war, which had enrolled a million and a half of men under arms, had left the fields uncultivated and deserted. A cruel famine wasted both city and country. The Jacobins, who, though their clubs were closed, still met at the corners of the streets and in the coffee-houses, took advantage of this public misery to turn popular indignation against the victorious Thermidorians. Tumults were again renewed, and hostile partisans met in angry conflicts. The young men of the two parties had frequent encounters in the pits of the theatres, bidding each other defiance, and often proceeding to blows

At the Théâtre Feydean, as in many other places, there was a bust of Marat, who was still idolized by the Jacobins. The young men of the Jeunesse Dorée, in expression of their detestation of Marat, and as an insult to the Jacobins, climbed the balcony, threw down the bust, and with shouts of execration dragged it through the mire of the streets.

THE JEUNESSE DOREÉ THROWING THE BUST OF MARAT INTO THE GUTTER.

The Jacobins, exasperated, swore to avenge the insult. Strongly armed, they paraded the streets, carrying a bust of Marat in triumph, and swearing bloody vengeance upon any who might attempt to disturb their march. The firmness of the Convention alone averted a sanguinary conflict. The public distress, intense and almost universal, embarrassed and overwhelmed the Convention with the most difficult questions in the endeavor to afford relief. On the 15th of March the supply of food in Paris was so small that it was deemed necessary to put the inhabitants upon rations, each individual being allowed but one pound of bread per day. Agitation and tumults were now rapidly increasing, and there were daily riots. The Convention was continually besieged and insulted by haggard multitudes with petitions which assumed the tone of fiercest threats. Scenes of

confusion ensued which bade defiance to all law, and which there was no authority to repress.

On the 20th of May there was one of the most fearful tumults which the Revolution had yet witnessed. At five in the morning the *générale* was beating in the public squares and the tocsin ringing in the faubourgs. The populace were rapidly mustering for any deeds of violence to which their leaders might conduct them. At eleven o'clock the Convention commenced its sitting. One of the members brought in a plan, which he had secretly obtained, of a very efficiently-organized insurrection. A crowd, mostly of women, filled the galleries. As the plan was read, which appalled the deputies, the galleries vociferously applauded. The Convention passed a few harmless decrees, such as, 1st, that the city government was responsible for any attack upon the Convention; 2d, that all the citizens were bound to receive orders from the Convention; and 3d, that there should be no insurrection. These decrees but provoked the derision of the galleries. The tumult now became so great, the women shouting "Bread!" and shaking their fists at the president and the deputies, that all business was at a stand, and not a word of debate could be heard.

At length, some soldiers were sent into the galleries with bayonets, and the women were driven into the streets. They soon, however, returned, aided by their friends. They battered down all the doors and broke in and filled the hall with an armed, shouting, brutal mob. Some of the citizens rallied for the defense of the Convention, and a fierce battle raged within the hall and around the doors. Pistols and muskets were discharged, swords clashed, bayonet crossed bayonet, while yells and shrieks and imprecations deafened the ear. Drunken women strode over the benches and clambered to the president's chair. A young deputy, Feraud, was stabbed, then shot; his head was cut off, and, pierced by a pike, was thrust into the face of the president, Boissy d'Anglas, who most heroically maintained his post and his composure through all these perilous scenes. For six hours the tumult raged unabated. It was now seven o'clock in the evening, and the mob drove all the deputies, like a flock of sheep, into the centre of the hall, surrounded them with bristling bayonets and pikes, and ordered them to issue decrees for the relief of the people. At length, near midnight, a detachment of the National Guard arrived, dispersed the crowd

around the palace, and, entering the hall with fixed bayonets, scattered the rioters. Tranquillity being restored, one of the members rose and said,

> "It is then true that this Assembly, the cradle of the Republic, has once more well nigh been its tomb. Fortunately, the crime of the conspirators is prevented. But, Representatives, you would not be worthy of the nation if you were not to avenge it in a signal manner."

SCENE IN THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The rest of the night was passed in devising schemes to crush the Jacobin power which had organized this insurrection. The Duchess of Abrantes, who was then in Paris, thus alludes to these events: "While the most frightful scenes," she writes, "were passing in the Convention, the

respectable inhabitants of Paris shut themselves up in their houses, concealed their valuables, and awaited, with fearful anxiety, the result. Toward evening my brother, whom we had not seen during the day, came home to get something to eat; he was almost famished, not having tasted food since the morning. Disorder still raged, and we heard the most frightful noise in the streets, mingled with the beating of drums. My brother had scarcely finished his hasty repast when General Bonaparte arrived to make a similar claim upon our hospitality. He also had tasted nothing since the morning, for all the restaurateurs were closed. He soon dispatched what my brother had left, and as he was eating he told us the news of the day. It was most appalling; my brother had informed us but of part. He did not know of the assassination of the unfortunate Feraud, whose body had been cut almost piecemeal. 'They took his head,' said Bonaparte, 'and presented it to poor Boissy d'Anglas, and the shock of this fiend-like act was almost death to the president in his chair. Truly,' added he, 'if we continue thus to sully our Revolution, it will be a disgrace to be a Frenchman.'"[441]

Alarmed by the advance of anarchy, the Convention immediately instituted proceedings against several prominent Jacobin members, who were known to be ringleaders of the insurrection. They were arrested and consigned to imprisonment in the Castle of Ham. Paris was declared to be in a state of siege, and Pichegru, then in the full lustre of his glory, was appointed commander of the armed force. The carriages which conveyed the arrested deputies to the Castle of Ham had to pass through the Elysian Fields. The Jacobins assembled in strong numbers and endeavored to rescue them. The energy of Pichegru repelled the attempt. A fight ensued, with cannon and small arms, in which several lives were lost.

While these melancholy scenes were transpiring in Paris, the combined fleets and armies of England, Austria, and Naples were fiercely assailing the Republic at every vulnerable point. England, being undisputed mistress of the sea, had nothing to fear from the conflagration which she was kindling all over Europe. To stimulate impoverished Austria to the war, the British government loaned her $23,000,000 (£4,600,000). She augmented her own naval force to a hundred thousand seamen, put into

commission one hundred and eight ships of the line, and raised her land forces to one hundred and fifty thousand men.[442]

The question to be decided was, whether France had a right to abolish monarchy and establish a republic. It is in vain for the Allies to say that they were contending against the outrages which existed in France, for their hostile movements preceded these scenes of carnage, and were the efficient cause of nearly all the calamities that ensued. And, deplorable as was the condition of France during the Reign of Terror, even that reign was far more endurable by the masses of the people than the domination of the old feudal despotism.

Carlyle makes the following appalling statement, the truth of which will not be denied by any careful student of the Old Régime:

> "History, looking back over this France through long times—back to Turgot's time, for instance, when dumb Drudgery staggered up to its king's palace, and, in wide expanse of sallow faces, squalor, and winged raggedness, presented hieroglyphically its petition of grievances, and, for answer, got hanged on a new gallows forty feet high—confesses mournfully *that there is no period in which the general twenty-five millions of France suffered less than in this period which they named the Reign of Terror!*
>
> "But it was not the dumb millions that suffered here; it was the speaking thousands, and hundreds, and units, who shrieked and published, and made the world ring with their wail, as they could and should; that is the grand peculiarity. The frightfulest births of time are never the loud-speaking ones, for these soon die; they are the silent ones, which live from century to century."[443]

The Royalist emigrants, taking advantage of the clemency of the Thermidorians, began now to return to France in great numbers, and were very active every where in trying to promote a counter-revolution, and in forming conspiracies to overthrow the Republic and re-establish the

Bourbons. They were supplied with immense sums of money to expend as bribes.

A new Constitution was formed to meet the new emergencies of the country. Instead of one General Assembly, they had two legislative bodies. The Senate, called the *Council of the Ancients*, consisted of two hundred and fifty members, of at least forty years of age, and all were to be either widowers or married; one third to be renewed every year. The lower house, called the *Council of the Five Hundred*, was to be composed of members of at least thirty years of age, to be renewed also annually by one third. Instead of an executive of sixteen committees, *five Directors* were intrusted with the executive power, to be renewed annually by one fifth. Thus organized, the ship of state was again launched upon its stormy voyage, to encounter tempests without and mutiny within. This Constitution was the work of the moderate Republican party, and restored the ascendency of the middle class. As such it was obnoxious to the Jacobins.[444] France was now so rent by hostile parties that no Constitution could long stand.

The old Constituent Assembly had, by a decree which was intended to be very patriotic and self-denying, excluded itself from the Legislative Assembly which was to succeed it. This act, however, proved to be injudicious and disastrous. The Legislative Assembly, wishing to secure a majority friendly to moderate Republicanism in the two bodies to be elected under the new Constitution, *decreed that two thirds of their own members should be elected* to the two new legislative bodies. This *decree*, which was accepted with great unanimity by France as a whole, was exceedingly obnoxious to the Royalists and to the Jacobins of Paris, both of whom hoped to obtain a majority under the new Constitution. These two extremes now joined hands, and, as usual, appealed for support to insurrection and the terrors of the mob. There was no excuse for this violence, for the *Constitution* was accepted almost unanimously by France, and the *decrees* by an immense majority. It was in Paris alone that there was any opposition, and even there the opposition was only to the *decrees*. Still, Royalists and Jacobins united to crush the will of the nation by a Parisian mob.

Paris was divided in forty-eight electoral sections or wards. The section of Lepelletier was the focus of the gathering storm. The tocsin was rung, drums beat, and armed bands collected. The Convention sent General Menou, a kind-hearted man, to surround this section and disarm it. Overawed by the high rank of the leaders, Menou parleyed with them, and, at length, alarmed by their numbers, their strength, and their determination, by a sort of capitulation disgracefully retreated.

Napoleon Bonaparte was then in Paris, out of employment, and was that evening at the Théâtre Feydeau. Some friends came and informed him of the scenes which were transpiring. He immediately left the theatre and hastened to the gallery of the Assembly, to witness the effect which would be produced upon that body by the tidings of the retreat of Menou.[445]

He found the Assembly in great commotion. Some one had moved the arrest of Menou, and his trial for treason. It was a scene of tumult and alarm, many speaking at once. Barras, who had acquired some reputation for intrepidity and energy, was appointed as chief of the forces in the place of Menou. Barras, who was well acquainted with the energetic character of Napoleon, and who probably saw him in the gallery, immediately requested that General Bonaparte should be appointed as his second in command. Barras knew his man, and was willing to surrender to the young brigadier-general the entire superintendence of the military arrangements to quell the revolt.

The Convention had five thousand troops at its command. The sections now, with clamor and tumult, were marching upon them with forty-five thousand. Barras was a man of commanding stature and of powerful frame. Napoleon, though he had acquired at Toulon a high reputation in the army, was but little known in Paris. When Barras introduced to the Convention the young general, a small, slender, pale-faced, smooth-cheeked youth, who seemed to be not more than eighteen years of age, all were surprised.

NAPOLEON BEFORE THE CONVENTION.

"Are you willing," inquired the president, "to undertake the defense of the Convention?"

"Yes," was the laconic reply.

The president hesitated, and then continued, "But are you aware of the magnitude of the undertaking?"

Napoleon fixed that eagle eye upon him which few could meet without quailing, and replied, "Perfectly; and I am in the habit of accomplishing that which I undertake. But one condition is indispensable. I must have the unlimited command, entirely untrammeled by any orders from the Convention."

There was no time for debate; and even the most stupid could see that in such an hour the public safety could only be secured by the prompt, concentrated action of a single mind, sufficiently powerful to meet the emergency. The characteristic traits of Napoleon's character were perhaps never more conspicuously displayed than on this occasion—his self-reliance, his skill in the choice of agents, his careful preparation against the possibility of defeat, and his fortitude in doing whatever might be necessary for the accomplishment of his plans.

Not a moment was lost. At Sablons, a few miles from Paris, there was a park of forty pieces of artillery. Napoleon dispatched a young soldier,

whom he well knew, of most chivalrous daring and impetuosity, Joachim Murat, to secure the guns. At the head of three hundred horse he was almost instantly on the gallop, and arrived at Sablons just in time to rescue the artillery from a smaller band of the insurrectionists, who had also been dispatched to secure it. The guns were brought to the Tuileries. They were promptly ranged to sweep all the avenues leading to the Tuileries. The cavalry and a part of the infantry were placed in reserve in the garden of the palace and in the Carrousel. The Convention awoke fully to a sense of its danger and to the energy of its commander when soldiers brought eight hundred muskets into the hall, with which the deputies were to arm themselves and advance to battle if necessary. Detachments of troops were dispatched to seize by surprise all the provisions and ammunition in Paris, and convey them to a safe dépôt in the Tuileries. A hospital for the wounded was established in the palace, provided with necessaries for every emergency. The troops of all kinds at Napoleon's disposal, variously estimated at from five to eight thousand, were strongly posted in the leading streets, at the bridges, in the Place Vendôme, and in the Place de la Révolution. A strong detachment was sent to occupy the heights of Meudon, Napoleon intending to retreat there, with the Convention, in case of defeat. One section in Paris had voted with the immense majority of the nation for the decrees. Chests of arms were sent to that section to arm the voters in defense of the laws. A detachment was sent to the road to St. Germain, to intercept any cannon from being brought from that direction.

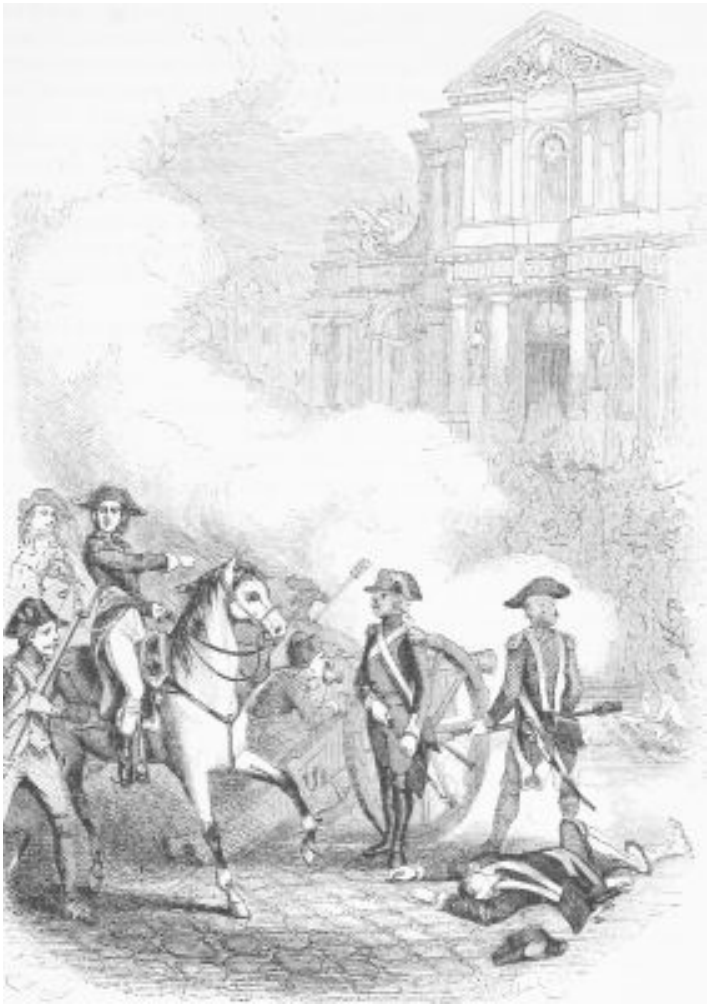
All this was accomplished in one short night, the 4th of October, Napoleon seeming to infuse his own energy into every one around him. In the mean time the sections, though by no means aware of the spirit they were doomed to encounter, were not idle. They had organized a kind of insurrectionary government, outlawed the committees of the Convention, and had established a tribunal to punish those who should resist its sovereignty. Several energetic generals, Jacobins, and also Royalists, creeping from their retreats, offered their services to lead the attack upon the Convention. General Danican, a Royalist, who had been a general of brigade in the civil war which had desolated La Vendée, was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces of the insurrection. He had the National Guard, forty thousand strong, well armed, officered, and disciplined, under his command. The morning of the 5th dawned.

The alarm-bells were now ringing and the *générale* beating. The armed hosts of the sections were mustering at their appointed rendezvous and preparing to march upon the Convention. The members, in their seats, in silence and awe awaited the assault, upon the issue of which their lives were suspended. Napoleon, pale, solemn, and perfectly calm, was waiting, resolved that the responsibility of the first blow should fall upon his assailants, and that he would take the responsibility of the second.

Soon the enemy were seen advancing from every direction, in masses which filled the narrow streets of the city. With music and banners they marched to attack the besieged on every side, confident, from their numbers, of an easy victory. They did not believe that the few and feeble troops of the Convention would dare to resist the populace of Paris, but cherished the delusion that a few shots from their own side would put all opposition to flight. Thus unhesitatingly they came within sweep of the grapeshot with which Napoleon had charged his guns. The troops of the Convention stood firm. The insurgents opened a volley of bullets upon them. It was the signal for an instantaneous discharge, direct, sanguinary, merciless, from every battery. A storm of grape swept the streets. The columns of the assailants wavered, turned, fled, and still the storm pursued them. One of the strongest battalions of the insurgents had posted itself on the steps of the Church of Saint Roche, where it occupied a commanding position for firing upon the gunners of the Convention. Napoleon directed his artillery to advance upon them by the cul de sac Dauphin, and immediately threw into their crowded ranks a storm of grapeshot. The insurgents fought manfully for a time, but were soon compelled to retreat, leaving the steps of the church covered with the slain. As they fled, Napoleon pushed his artillery up the street, and, wheeling to the right and the left, swept the whole length of the Rue St. Honoré. In two hours the victory was achieved, forty thousand men were vanquished by five thousand, the streets were cleared, and Napoleon returned in calm triumph to the Tuileries.[446]

It is interesting to catch a glimpse of Napoleon in his domestic life at this time. The Duchess of Abrantes writes, "My parents arrived in Paris on the 4th of September. Two days after my father was very ill. Bonaparte, apprised by my brother, came immediately to see us. He appeared to be

affected by the state of my father, who, though in great pain, insisted on seeing him. He came every day, and in the morning he sent or called himself to inquire how he had passed the night. I can not recollect his conduct at that period without sincere gratitude.



THE SECTIONS AT SAINT ROCHE.

"He informed us that Paris was in such a state as must necessarily lead to a convulsion. The sections were in, if not open, at least almost avowed insurrection. The section Lepelletier, which was ours, was the most turbulent, and, in fact, the most to be dreaded. Its orators did not scruple to deliver the most incendiary speeches. They asserted that the power of the assembled people was above the laws. 'Matters are getting from bad to worse,' said Bonaparte; 'the counter-revolution will shortly break forth, and it will, at the same time, become the source of disasters.'

"As I have said, he came every day; he dined with us and passed the evening in the drawing-room, talking in a low tone beside the easy-chair of my mother, who, worn out with fatigue, dozed for a few moments to recruit her strength, for she never quitted my father's pillow. I recollect that, one evening, my father being very ill, my mother was weeping and in great tribulation. It was ten o'clock. At that time it was impossible to induce any of the servants of the hotel to go out after nine. Bonaparte said nothing. He ran down stairs and posted away to Duchannais, whom he brought back with him in spite of his objections. The weather was dreadful; the rain poured in torrents. Bonaparte had not been able to meet with a hackney coach to go to M. Duchannais; he was wet through. Yes, indeed, at that period Bonaparte had a heart susceptible of attachment.

"Meanwhile we became more and more alarmed every day by the dangers which manifested themselves around us. Paris rung with the tumult of the factions, each of which drew the sword and hoisted its standard. Against the Convention, then the only real authority, were arrayed the sections, which for some days past again declared war against it. Paris resembled a garrison town. At night we heard the sentries calling to and answering one another, as in a besieged town. The strictest search was made for arms and ammunition.

"For some years my mother had been subject to nervous paroxysms. At such times she disliked to have any body about her. On reaching the drawing-room I found her all in tears and in one of the most violent spasms. General Bonaparte was with her, endeavoring to soothe her. He told me that on his arrival he found her on the point of attacking the adjunct of the section to prevent his entering my father's chamber. 'I should be glad to spare your mother such scenes,' said he; 'I have not much influence, nevertheless I will go myself to the section. I will see the president if possible and settle the business at once. Paris is all on fire, especially since this morning. It is necessary to be very cautious in every thing one does and in all one says. Your brother must not go out any more. Attend to all this, for your mother is in a sad state.'

"This was a dreadful night for my father. The next morning the *générale* was beat. The streets were already very unsafe, though people were still passing to and fro in Paris, as though they were not going to cut one another's throats a few hours afterward. The tumult became very great

at dusk; the theatres were nevertheless open. Indeed, we are a nation of lunatics!

"On the morning of the 12th Vendémiaire (October 4) Bonaparte, who had called according to custom, appeared to be lost in thought. He went out, came back, went out again, and again returned when we were at our dessert. 'I breakfasted very late,' said he, 'at Bourrienne's. They talked politics there till I was quite tired of the subject. I will try to learn the news, and if I have any thing interesting I will come and tell you.'

"We did not see him again. The night was tumultuous, especially in our section. The whole Rue de la Loi was bristling with bayonets. Barricades were already set up in our streets. On the morning of the 13th (October 5) my father was very ill. For some hours we flattered ourselves that matters would be adjusted between the Convention and the rebels; but about half past four the firing of the cannon began. The effect on my poor father was terrible. He gave a piercing shriek, calling for assistance, and was seized with the most violent delirium. All the scenes of the Revolution passed in review before him, and every discharge that he heard was a blow struck at him personally. What a day! what an evening! what a night! Every pane of glass was broken in pieces. Toward evening the section fell back upon us. The fighting was continued almost under our window, but when it had come to St. Roche we imagined that the house was tumbling about our ears.

"My father was in the agonies of death; he shouted, he wept. Never, no, never, shall I suffer what I did during that terrible night. Next day tranquillity was restored, we were told, in Paris. I can scarcely give any account of the 14th. Toward evening Bonaparte came for a moment; he found me dissolved in tears. When he learned the cause his cheerful and open countenance suddenly changed. My mother entered at that moment. She knew no more than I how important a part Bonaparte had played on that great day. 'Oh!' said my mother, 'they have killed my husband. You, Napoleon, can feel for my distress. Do you recollect that on the first Prairial, when you came to sup with me, you told me that you had just prevented Barras from bombarding Paris? Do you recollect it? For my part I have not forgotten it.'

"Many persons have alleged that Napoleon always regretted that day. Be that as it may, he was always exceedingly kind to my mother in these

moments of affliction, though himself in circumstances that could not but outweigh all other interests. He was like a son—like a brother."[447]

The Convention treated the insurrectionists, who had thus been so severely punished, with the utmost clemency.[448] Napoleon received the thanks of the Convention and a brilliant reception. The Convention united Belgium with France; decreed that the punishment of death should be abolished as soon as a general peace with Europe could be effected; changed the name of the Place of the Revolution to the Place of Concord; pronounced an amnesty for all acts connected with the Revolution, excepting one person implicated in the last revolt; and then, on the 26th of October, 1795, the President of the Convention pronounced these words,

> "The National Convention declares that its mission is accomplished, and its session is closed."

With one united shout—*The Republic forever!*—the deputies left the hall and dispersed to their homes.

To the States-General fell the task, after a terrific struggle with king and nobles, to create the Constituent Assembly, a great national congress, whose function it was to moderate the despotism of the throne by conferring upon a nation of twenty-five millions of people, after ages of oppression, constitutional liberty. The Constituent Assembly, which succeeded the States-General, abolished those old institutions of feudal servitude which had become utterly unendurable, and established a constitutional monarchy, taking as a model, in the main, the British Constitution. The Legislative Assembly then took the place of the Constituent, to enact laws in harmony with this Constitution. It soon, however, found that the king was in league with despotic Europe to overthrow constitutional liberty and restore the old despotism. It consequently suspended the king, and the Constitution with which his power was inseparably interwoven, and dissolved itself.[449] The National Convention, which succeeded, commenced its deliberations on the 21st of September, 1792.

"The Convention," says Thiers, "found a dethroned king, an annulled Constitution, an administration entirely destroyed, a paper money discredited, old skeletons of regiments worn out and empty. Thus it was

not liberty that it had to proclaim in presence of an enfeebled and despised throne, it was liberty that it had to defend against all Europe—a very difficult task. Without being for a moment daunted, it proclaimed the Republic in the face of the hostile armies; it then sacrificed the king, to cut off all retreat from itself; it subsequently took all the powers into its own hands, and constituted itself a dictatorship. Voices were raised in its bosom which talked of *humanity*, when it wished to hear of nothing but *energy*; it stifled them. This dictatorship, which the necessity of the general preservation had obliged it to arrogate to itself over all France, twelve of its members soon arrogated to themselves over it, for the same reason, and on account of the same necessity. From the Alps to the sea, from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, these twelve dictators seized upon all, both men and things, and commenced the greatest and the most awful struggle with the nations of Europe ever recorded in history. They spilt torrents of blood, till, having become useless from victory, and odious by the abuse of strength, they fell.

"The Convention then took the dictatorship again into its own hands, and began, by degrees, to relax the springs of that terrible administration. Rendered confident by victory, it listened to humanity, and indulged its spirit of regeneration. It aimed at every thing good and great, and pursued this purpose for a year; but the parties crushed under its pitiless authority revived under its clemency. Two factions, in which were blended, under infinite variety of shades, the friends and the foes of the Revolution, attacked it by turns. It vanquished the one and the other, and, till the last day, showed itself heroic amid dangers. Lastly, it framed a Republican Constitution, and, after a struggle of three years with Europe, with the factions, with itself, mutilated and bleeding, it dissolved itself, and transmitted the government of France to the Directory."[450]

FOOTNOTES:

441. Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Abrantes, p. 90.

442. Thiers, vol. iii., p. 242. New Annual Register.

443. Carlyle's History of the French Revolution, vol. ii., p. 460.

444. "This Constitution was the best, the wisest, the most liberal, and the most provident that had as yet been established or projected; it contained the result of six years' revolutionary and legislative experience."—*Mignet*, p. 301.

445. Las Casas.

446. There is no exaggeration in the following account of the condition of France at this time: "Since France had become Republican every species of evil had accumulated upon its devoted head. Famine, a total cessation of commerce, civil war, attended by its usual accompaniments—conflagration, robbery, pillage, and murder. Justice was interrupted; the sword of the law wielded by iniquity; property spoliated; confiscation rendered the order of the day; the scaffold permanently erected; calumnious denunciations held in the highest estimation. Nothing was wanting to the general desolation."—*Hist. de la Conv.*, vol. ii., p. 215, 216.

447. Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Abrantes, p. 118.

448. "After this memorable conflict, when Bonaparte had been publicly received with enthusiasm by the Convention, who declared that he and Barras deserved well of their country, a great change took place in him, and the change in regard to attention to his person was not the least remarkable. He now never went out but in a handsome carriage, and he lived in a very respectable house, Rue des Capucines. In short, he had become an important, a necessary personage, and all without noise, as if by magic."—*Duchess of Abrantes.*

449. The States-General held its session from May 6, 1789.

450. Thiers, Fr. Rev., vol. iii., p. 333.

Chapter XXXIX.
The Directory

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Constitution of the Directory.—Distracted State of Public Affairs.—New Expedition to La Vendée.—Death of the Dauphin.—Release of the Princess.—Pacification of La Vendée.—Riots in London.—Execution of Charette.—Napoleon takes command of the Army of Italy.—The first Proclamation.—Triumphs in Italy.—Letter of General Hoche.—Peace with Spain.—Establishment of the Cispadane Republic.—Negotiations with England.—Contemplated Invasion of Ireland.—Memorials of Wolfe Tone.—Deplorable State of Public Affairs.—Description of Napoleon.—Composition of the Directory.

The government of the Directory went into operation on the 27th of October, 1795. The two legislative bodies, the Council of the Ancients and the Council of the Five Hundred, met and chose for the five directors Lareveillère Lepeaux, Le Tourneur, Rewbel, Carnot, and Barras. "Among these," says Thiers, "there was not a man of genius, nor even any man of high reputation, excepting Carnot. But what was to be done at the end of a sanguinary revolution which, in a few years, had devoured several generations of men of genius of every description? In the Assemblies there was not left one extraordinary orator; in diplomacy there remained not one celebrated negotiator."[451] The state of public affairs at this time was deplorable in the extreme. Innumerable factions disturbed the state. A very sanguinary war was raging around the frontiers. The embers of civil war were still smoldering and frequently bursting out into flame. Three powerful parties were struggling almost with the energies of despair for the supremacy—the old Royalists, the Thermidorians or moderate Republicans, and the Jacobins, who wielded, as the great instrument of terror, the energies of the Parisian mob. Many of the most intelligent men

already foresaw that there was no hope for distracted France but in the action of some mighty mind which could mould the tumultuous elements and evolve order from the confusion.[452]

The British government, undismayed by the disaster of Quiberon, now sent another expedition to the shores of La Vendée to rouse the Royalists to insurrection. The expedition consisted of two thousand English infantry, five hundred horse, several regiments of French emigrants, a great number of officers to take command of the marshaled peasantry, and arms, ammunition, provisions, clothing, and gold in abundance. Should this expedition successfully land and rally around it the Royalist insurgents in promising numbers, it was immediately to be followed by another still more powerful. The Count d'Artois (Charles X.) was placed in command of this force. Charette, a very intrepid Royalist chieftain, had raised some ten thousand peasants, and was in command of the coast to welcome the invaders. But General Hoche fell upon the insurgent Vendeeans and scattered them; and the English fleet, after hovering for some time along the coast, being unable to effect a landing, and disappointed in the support they hoped to have met, abandoned the enterprise and returned to England.[453]

While the coast of France was thus threatened the Allies on the Rhine gained some very decisive victories, and drove the routed Republicans before them. There was no money in the treasury of the Directory. The paper money, which had been freely issued, had become almost worthless, and the armies were now in destitution and rags. Such were the difficulties with which the new government had to grapple.[454]

On the 8th of June the dauphin died in the Temple. While he lived he was considered by the Royalists the legitimate King of France, under the title of Louis XVII. Upon his death the emigrants declared the Count of Provence king, and he assumed the title of Louis XVIII. It will be remembered that the Convention sent some deputies to arrest Dumouriez, and that he seized these commissioners and handed them over to the Austrians as hostages. The Directory now exchanged the young princess, who still survived in woeful captivity, for these commissioners and a few other distinguished prisoners held by the Austrians. It was the 19th of December when this unhappy child left her cell, where she had endured

agonies such as few on earth had known, to be conveyed back to the palaces of her maternal ancestors.

The guns of Napoleon, quelling the insurgent sections, had established the government of the Directory. To secure Paris and France from similar scenes of violence, an imposing force was organized, called the Army of the Interior, and Napoleon was placed in command. As by magic, under his efficient command, this body was organized into the highest discipline and efficiency, and, overawing the discontented, maintained public order. A formidable camp of these troops was established at Grenelle. But for Napoleon the Directory could not have come into being. But for Napoleon it could not have lived a year, struggling against the conspiracies which ever crowded it.[455] General Hoche, operating with singular wisdom and humanity, succeeded in the pacification of the inhabitants of La Vendée. They surrendered their arms, and peace was restored to that distracted region. Still William Pitt clamored for war against the French Republic. The English *people* were indignant at these unjust assaults against a neighboring nation struggling to throw off the chains of intolerable servitude, and demanded peace with France. The liberty-loving Englishmen met in immense gatherings in the open air, and denounced the war system in the most bold and decisive resolves. As the king rode to Parliament the populace pursued him, pelted his carriage with stones, broke the windows, and it was asserted that an air-gun was fired at him. Pitt, riding on horseback, was recognized by the populace, and with difficulty escaped from their hands covered with mud. Fox and Sheridan in Parliament were loud and eloquent in the denunciation of the war measures of the ministry.[456] Pitt endeavored to defend himself against the assaults of the opposition by saying that *English blood* had not been shed. "True," replied Sheridan, "English blood has not been shed, but English honor has oozed from every pore."

The Allies, exhilarated by their successes on the Rhine, prepared to press the war with new vigor. Pitt obtained from Parliament a new loan of thirty-five millions of dollars. General Bonaparte was promoted from the command of the Army of the Interior to that of the Army of Italy. He immediately entered upon that Italian campaign which gave him renown throughout the world.

Though the Vendeeans had surrendered their arms and were rejoicing in the enjoyment of peace, Charette wandered about the country, refusing all overtures at reconciliation, and striving, with great energy, to rouse new forces of insurrection. The entire pacification of La Vendée now depended upon the capture of Charette. With almost unparalleled energy and bravery he succeeded for several months in eluding his foes. At last, on the 24th of March, 1796, he fell into an ambuscade. He was armed to the teeth, and fought with the ferocity of a tiger at bay. He received several sabre-blows before he fell and was secured. At his examination he with dignity averred his detestation of republicanism and his devotion to royalty. He had deluged the land with the blood of civil war, and, as a traitor, was doomed to die. On the 30th of March he was led out to execution. A platoon of soldiers was drawn up but a few paces before him. He stood erect, with his eyes unbandaged, and, apparently without the tremor of a nerve, gave the command to fire. He fell dead, pierced by many bullets. He had displayed marvelous heroism in a bad cause. Refusing to submit to laws established by the overwhelming majority of his countrymen, he was deluging the land in blood in the endeavor to rivet again upon France the chains of the most intolerable despotism. The Royalists all over Europe mourned his death. But France rejoiced, for the fall of Charette terminated the civil war.

One hundred thousand men had been under the command of General

Hoche in the strife of La Vendée. These were now at liberty to march to repel the foreign invader. Two powerful armies, of eighty thousand each, were collected on the Rhine. But they could not hold their ground against the outnumbering Austrians. In one of these engagements the distinguished young general Marceau was killed. He was struck by a ball fired by a Tyrolean marksman, and fell from his horse mortally wounded. His soldiers, on the rapid retreat, were unable to rescue him, and he was left in his blood to the humanity of the victors. The Austrians generously did every thing in their power for his relief, but he died, three days after, in the twenty-seventh year of his age.

LA CHARETTE TAKEN PRISONER.

About thirty thousand French soldiers, in rags, destitute of the munitions of war, and almost famished, were ineffectually struggling against their foes on the southern slopes of the Apennines. Napoleon was placed in command of these starving troops, but the government was unable to supply him with any funds for the prosecution of the war. On the 27th of March he placed himself at the head of these enfeebled and discouraged battalions. Young generals, who subsequently obtained great renown—Angereau, Massena, Laharpe, Serrurier, and Berthier—composed the officers of his staff. The levy *en masse* had filled the ranks with young men from good families, well informed, distinctly understanding the nature of the conflict, detesting the old feudal despotism which allied Europe was striving to impose upon them anew, and enthusiastically devoted to the principles of liberty and equal rights which the Revolution was endeavoring to implant. Though most of them were young, they had many of them spent years in the field, had seen many bloody battles, and, inured to the hardships of war, were veteran soldiers. Sixty thousand Piedmontese and Austrians, under Colli and Beaulieu, crowded the

northern slopes and the crest of the mountains, endeavoring to force their way through the defiles upon France. Napoleon's first words to his troops roused them as with electric fire.

DEATH OF GENERAL MARCEAU.

"Soldiers," said he, "you are ill fed, almost naked. The government owes you much, but can do nothing for you. Your patience, your courage, do you honor, but procure you neither glory nor advantage. I am about to lead you into the most fertile plains in the world. You will there find large cities, rich provinces; you will there find honor, glory, and wealth. Soldiers of Italy, will your courage fail you?"

On the 12th of April his troops were in motion. A series of desperate battles and of resplendent victories ensued. At the close of two weeks Napoleon issued the following proclamation:

> "Soldiers, in a fortnight you have gained six victories, taken twenty-one pairs of colors, fifty-five pieces of cannon, several fortresses, and conquered the richest part of Piedmont. You

> have made fifteen thousand prisoners, and killed or wounded more than ten thousand men. You had hitherto been fighting for barren rocks, rendered glorious by your courage, but useless to the country. You now rival, by your services, the army of Holland and the Rhine. Destitute of every thing, you have supplied all your wants. You have gained battles without cannon, crossed rivers without bridges, made forced marches without shoes, bivouacked without brandy and often without bread. The Republican phalanxes, the soldiers of liberty alone, could have endured what you have endured. Thanks be to you for it, soldiers. Your grateful country will owe to you its prosperity; and if your conquest at Toulon foreboded the glorious campaign of 1793, your present victories forbode one still more glorious. The two armies which so lately attacked you boldly, are fleeing affrighted before you. The perverse men who laughed at your distress, and rejoiced in thought at the triumph of your enemies, are confounded and trembling.
>
> "But, soldiers, you have done nothing, since more remains to be done. Neither Turin nor Milan is yours. The ashes of the conquerors of Tarquin are still trampled upon by the murderers of Basseville."[457]

Napoleon now summoned all his energies to drive the Austrians out of Italy. In two months the work was done; and Paris, France, Europe was electrified by the narrative of deeds of daring and success, such as war had never recorded before. In all the towns and cities of Italy the French armies were received as deliverers, for the subjugated Italians were eager to throw off the hateful yoke of Austrian despotism. Napoleon, having unbounded confidence in himself, and but very little respect for the weak men who composed the Directory, took all matters of diplomacy, as well as war, into his own hands, and, sustained by the enthusiasm of his soldiers, settled the affairs of Italy according to his own views of expediency.

The Royalists, hoping for the overthrow of the Republic and for the return of Louis XVIII., were exceedingly chagrined by these victories.

They left no means of calumny untried to sully the name of Napoleon. Europe was filled with falsehoods respecting him, and reports were circulated that General Hoche was to be sent from Paris to arrest him in the midst of his army. These rumors assumed such importance that the government wrote a letter to Napoleon contradicting them; and General Hoche, with the magnanimity of a man incapable of jealousy, over his own name published a letter expressing his admiration of the commander of the Army of Italy.

"Men," he wrote, "who, concealed or unknown during the first years of the foundation of the Republic, now think only of seeking the means of destroying it, and speak of it merely to slander its firmest supporters, have, for some days past, been spreading reports most injurious to the armies, and to one of the general officers who commanded them. Can they, then, no longer attain their object by corresponding openly with the horde of conspirators resident at Hamburg? Must they, in order to gain the patronage of the masters whom they are desirous of giving to France, vilify the leaders of the armies? Why is Bonaparte, then, the object of the wrath of these gentry? Is it because he beat themselves and their friends in Vendémiaire?[458] Is it because he is dissolving the armies of kings, and furnishing the Republic with the means of bringing this honorable war to a glorious conclusion? Ah! brave young man, where is the Republican soldier whose heart does not burn with the desire to imitate thee? Courage, Bonaparte! lead our victorious armies to Naples, to Vienna; reply to thy personal enemies by humbling kings, by shedding fresh lustre over our armies, and leave to us the task of upholding thy glory."

Still the Royalists were busy with incessant plots and intrigues for the overthrow of the government. The treasury was utterly bankrupt, paper money, almost utterly worthless, flooded the land, and the finances were in a state of inextricable embarrassment. The Jacobins and the Royalists were equally eager to demolish the Directory by any conceivable measures of treason and violence. Never was a nation in a more deplorable state, harassed by a foreign war which demanded all its energies, and torn by domestic dissensions which no human wisdom seemed capable of healing.

The Jacobins adopted even the desperate measure to feign a Royalist insurrection; to scatter white cockades, the emblem of Bourbon power; to

shout *Vive le Roi!* and to discharge musketry and throw petards into the streets, that the people, alarmed by the peril of Bourbon restoration, might throw themselves into the arms of the Jacobins for protection.[459] A mob of nearly a thousand most determined men marched, in the night of the 10th of September, upon the camp at Grenelle, hoping to fraternize with the soldiers in this treasonable endeavor to overthrow the government. Several hundreds fell dead or wounded in this frantic attempt.

NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 10, 1796.

The Directory now attempted to enter into peaceful relations with other powers, and effected a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, with Spain. Envoys were also sent to the Ottoman Porte and to Venice for the same purpose. Piedmont had sued for peace and obtained it. The Italians of Upper Italy, exulting in their emancipation from the Austrians, under the protection of Napoleon established the Cispadane Republic. Without the support of his strong arm they could not for a day resist the encroachments of the surrounding despotisms. The first National Assembly of this infant republic met at Modena, October 16, 1796. The people were electrified with delight at this unexpected achievement of freedom. The Assembly sent an address to Napoleon, informing him of the principles of their new government.

"Never forget," said Napoleon, in his reply, "that laws are mere nullities without the force necessary to support them. Attend to your

military organization, which you have the means of placing on a respectable footing. You will then be more fortunate than the people of France, for you will arrive at liberty without passing through the ordeal of revolution."

The Directory had for some time been attempting to effect peace with England. On the 18th of December the British government stated on what terms it would consent to sheathe the sword. M. Thiers expresses the feelings of France in reference to this offer in the following terms:

> "Thus France, having been iniquitously forced into war, after she had expended enormous sums, and from which she had come off victorious—France was not to gain a single province, while the northern powers had just divided a kingdom between them (Poland), and England had recently made immense acquisitions in India. France, who still occupied the line of the Rhine, and who was mistress of Italy, was to evacuate the Rhine and Italy at the bare summons of England! Such conditions were absurd and inadmissible. The very proposal of them was an insult, and they could not be listened to."[460]

To conquer a peace, the Directory now meditated a direct attack upon England. The Catholic Irish, over three millions in number, hating implacably their English conquerors, were ardent to rise, under the guarantee of France, and establish a republican government. They had sent secret agents to Paris to confer with the Directory. Wolfe Tone, one of the leaders of the Irish revolutionists, addressed memorials to the French Directory soliciting aid.

"The Catholics of Ireland," said he, "are 3,150,000, all trained from their infancy in an hereditary hatred and abhorrence of the English name. For these five years they have fixed their eyes most earnestly on France, whom they look upon, with great justice, as fighting their battles, as well as that of all mankind who are oppressed. Of this class I will stake my head there are 500,000 who would fly to the standard of the Republic if they saw it once displayed in the cause of liberty and their country.

"The Republic may also rely with confidence on the support of the Dissenters, actuated by reason and reflection, as well as the Catholics impelled by misery and inflamed by detestation of the English name. In the year 1791 the Dissenters of Belfast first formed the Club of United Irishmen, so called because in that club, for the first time, Dissenters and Catholics were seen together in harmony and union. Corresponding clubs were rapidly formed, the object of which was to subvert the tyranny of England, establish the independence of Ireland, and frame a free republic on the broad basis of liberty and equality.

"The Catholics also have an organization, commencing about the same time with the clubs last mentioned, but composed of Catholics only. In June last it embraced the whole peasantry of the provinces of Ulster, Leinster, and Connaught, three fourths of the nation, and I have little doubt that it has since extended into Munster, the remaining province. The eyes of this whole body, which may be said, almost without a figure, to be the people of Ireland, are turned with the most anxious expectation to France for assistance and support. The oath of their union recites that they will be faithful to the united nations of France and Ireland."[461]

An expedition to Ireland was secretly resolved upon. A fleet of fifteen sail of the line, twenty frigates, six luggers, and fifty transports, containing sixteen thousand troops, sailed on the 16th of December to land in Bantry Bay, on the coast of Ireland. But the very night after the squadron left port a heavy storm arose, in which one ship foundered and the fleet was widely dispersed. A singular series of casualties ensued. Some of the ships entered the bay, but not finding their companions, after waiting a short time, returned to France. Other ships of the expedition soon after entered, but, finding the bay deserted, they also returned. The expedition thus proved a total failure.[462]

The inefficient Directory was quite unable to rectify the disorders into which the internal affairs of the state were plunged. They uttered loud complaints, which did but increase discontent and disgust. The press, being entirely free, indulged in the utmost violence; Royalists and Jacobins assailing the feeble government without mercy and thwarting its operations in every possible way. The army of Italy was triumphant—almost miraculously so. Every where else the Republic was in disgrace.

The Directory endeavored to throw the blame of the public calamities upon the two Councils, and published the following message, which was as true as it was ill-advised:

> "All departments are distressed. The pay of the troops is in arrear; the defenders of the country, in rags and enervated by want, in disgust are led to desertion. The hospitals are destitute of furniture, fire, and drugs. The charitable institutions, utterly impoverished, repel the poor and infirm. The creditors of the state, the contractors who supply the armies, with difficulty obtain but a small portion of the sums that are their due. Distress keeps aloof men who could perform the same services better and cheaper. The roads are cut up; the communications interrupted. The public functionaries are without salary; from one end of the Republic to the other judges and administrators may be seen reduced to the horrible alternative either of dragging on, with their families, a miserable existence, or of being dishonored by selling themselves to intrigue. The evil-disposed are every where busy. In many places murder is being organized, and the police, without activity, without energy, because it is without pecuniary means, can not put a stop to these disorders."

All eyes were directed to the achievements of Napoleon, who, with superhuman energy, was destroying army after army of the Allies, astounding Europe by his exploits, and exciting the admiration of his countrymen. Thiers thus describes the position he then occupied in the public mind:

> "Sickness, together with the excessive fatigues of the campaign, had weakened him extremely. He could scarcely sit on horseback; his cheeks were hollow and livid. His whole appearance was deplorable. His eyes alone, still bright and piercing as ever, indicated that the fire of his soul was not extinguished. His physical proportions formed a singular contrast with his genius and his renown, a contrast amusing to

soldiers at once jovial and enthusiastic. Notwithstanding the decline of his strength, his extraordinary energy supported him and imparted an activity which was applied to all objects at once.

"He had begun what he called *the war against robbers*. Intriguers of all kinds had thronged to Italy for the purpose of introducing themselves into the administration of the armies and profiting by the wealth of that fine country. While simplicity and indigence pervaded the armies of the Rhine, luxury pervaded that of Italy—luxury as great as its glory. The soldiers, well clothed and well fed, were every where cordially received, and lived in pleasure and abundance. The officers, the generals, participated in the general opulence, and laid the foundations of their fortunes.

"Bonaparte, who had within him all the passions, but who, at that moment, was engrossed by one passion, that of glory, lived in a simple and austere manner, seeking relaxation only in the society of his wife, to whom he was tenderly attached, and who had come, at his desire, to his head-quarters. Indignant at the disorders of the administration, he strictly scrutinized the minutest details, verified by personal inspection the accounts of the companies, denounced the dishonest administrators without mercy, and caused them to be prosecuted."

Among the Directors, Carnot was one of the noblest of men. The purity of his character slander has never attempted to taint. Barras was a fearless soldier and a shameless debauchee. He boasted of the profligacies in which he openly indulged, and he rioted in boundless extravagance, which he supported through corruption and bribes. Rewbel was a lawyer, a man of ability and integrity.[463] These three men had belonged to different political parties during the Revolution, and each detested the others. Lareveillère was an honest man, but destitute of those commanding qualities so essential to the post he occupied. Le Tourneur was a vain,

good-natured man who merely echoed the voice of Carnot. All the Directors but Barras occupied, with their families, apartments in the Palace of the Luxembourg. In the public mind this discordant Directory consisted of two parties, Barras, Rewbel, and Lareveillère in the majority, and Carnot and Le Tourneur in the opposition.

FOOTNOTES:

451. Thiers, History of the French Revolution, vol. iii., p. 338.

452. "France, exhausted by every species of suffering, had lost even the power of uttering a complaint; and we had all arrived at such a point of depression that death, if unattended by pain, would have been wished for even by the youngest human being, because it offered the prospect of repose, and every one panted for that blessing at any price. But it was ordained that many days, months, and years should still continue in that state of horrible agitation, the true foretaste of the torments of hell."—*Memoirs of the Duchess of Abrantes*, p. 296.

453. A *Republican* does not view this endeavor on the part of the British government to foment civil war in France as a *Royalist* views it. "It is *painful*," says Mr. Alison, "to reflect how different might have been the issue of the campaign had Great Britain really put forth its strength in the contest, and, instead of landing a few thousand men on a coast bristling with bayonets, sent thirty thousand men to make head against the Republicans till the Royalist forces were so organized as to be able to take the field with regular troops." It was this persistent determination, on the part of the British government and allied Europe, that France should not enjoy free institutions, which led to nearly all the sanguinary scenes of the French Revolution, and which, for nearly a quarter of a century, made Europe red with blood.

454. "All these forces [of the Republic] were in a state of extreme penury, and totally destitute of the equipments necessary for the carrying on of a campaign. They had neither caissons, nor horses, nor magazines. The soldiers were almost naked and the generals, even, frequently in want of the necessaries of life. Multitudes had taken advantage of the relaxation of authority following the fall of Robespierre to desert and return to their homes, and the government, so far from being able to bring them back to their colors, were not even able to levy conscripts in the interior to supply their place."—*Alison*, vol. i., p. 369.

Paper money had been issued to the almost incredible amount of 2,000,000,000 dollars, or 10,000,000,000 francs. This paper money had so depreciated that a pound of sugar cost eighty dollars in paper money.

455. Thiers, Hist. French Rev., vol. iii., p. 353.

456. Ibid., vol. iii., p. 364.

457. M. Basseville, an envoy of the French Republic at Rome, was attacked by a mob and cruelly murdered.

458. Quelling the insurgent sections.

459. Thiers's French Revolution, vol. iv., p. 10.

460. Thiers's French Revolution, vol. iv., p. 66.

461. Wolfe Tone's First Memorial to the French Directory, vol. ii., p. 187.

462. "It is a curious subject for speculation what might have been the result had Hoche succeeded in landing with sixteen thousand of his best troops on the Irish shores. To those who consider, indeed, the patriotic spirit, indomitable valor, and persevering character of the English people, and the complete command they had of the sea, the final issue of such a contest can not appear doubtful; but it is equally evident that the addition of such a force and so able a commander to the numerous bodies of Irish malcontents would have engendered a dreadful domestic war, and that the whole energies of the empire might for a very long period have been employed in saving itself from dismemberment."—*Alison's History of Europe*, vol. i., p. 444.

463. "Carnot, Barras, Rewbel, and Lareveillère had been members of the Convention; and, although none of them had been famous during the Reign of Terror for any atrocious act, still the three first had voted the death of the king—a vote which, notwithstanding the fatal though powerful considerations that may be presented in alleviation, placed them among the most furious Jacobins, and was prejudicial to the respect with which they ought to have been invested."—*Memoirs of Lavalette*.

Chapter XL.
The Overthrow of the Directory and the Establishment of the Consulate

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It was now the month of March, 1797, and Napoleon, having driven the Austrians out of Italy, issued the following proclamation, an unexaggerated statement of facts which amazed and appalled hostile Europe

"Soldiers! the capture of Mantua has put an end to the war of Italy. You have been victorious in fourteen pitched battles and seventy actions. You have taken 100,000 prisoners, 500 field-pieces, 2000 heavy cannon, and four pontoon trains. The contributions laid on the countries you have conquered have fed, maintained, and paid the army; besides which, you have sent thirty millions ($6,000,000) to the Minister of Finance for the use of the public treasury. You have enriched the Museum of Paris with three hundred master-pieces of ancient and modern Italy, which it had required thirty centuries to produce. You have conquered for the Republic the finest countries in Europe. The kings of Sardinia and Naples, the Pope, and the Duke of Parma are separated from the coalition.

> You have expelled the English from Leghorn, Genoa, and Corsica. Still higher destinies await you. You will prove yourselves worthy of them. Of all the foes who combined to stifle our Republic in its birth the emperor alone remains."

On the 16th of March the little army of Bonaparte crossed the Tagliamento to march upon Vienna, there to compel Austria to cease the iniquitous war which now for six years had desolated Europe. Battle after battle ensued, and the Austrians met the French only to be vanquished. On the 31st of March Napoleon wrote to the Archduke Charles, who was brother of the emperor and commander-in-chief of the Austrian forces, as follows:

> "General-in-Chief: brave soldiers make war and desire peace. Has not this war lasted six years? Have we not slain men enough and inflicted calamities enough on suffering humanity? It cries out on all sides. Europe, which had taken up arms against the French Republic, has laid them down. Your nation alone is left, and yet blood is about to be spilled more abundantly than ever.
>
> "The Executive Directory of the French Republic communicated to his majesty the emperor its desire to put an end to the war which afflicts both nations. The intervention of the Court of London has opposed this wish. Is there, then, no hope of arrangement? And must we continue to slaughter one another for the interests and the passions of a nation which knows nothing of the calamities of war? You, general, who are by birth so near to the throne, and above all the petty passions which so frequently actuate ministers and governments, are you determined to merit the title of benefactor of the whole human race and the real savior of Germany?
>
> "Imagine not, general, that I mean by this that it is not possible to save her by the force of arms. But, even supposing that the chances of war turn in your favor, Germany will not,

> on that account, be the less ravaged. As for me, general, if the overture which I have the honor to make to you can save the life of a single man, I shall be prouder of the civic crown which I shall feel that I have deserved than of the melancholy glory which can result from military successes."[464]

The archduke replied that he was commanded to prosecute the war, and had no authority to enter into conference upon terms of peace.[465] The war was now prosecuted with renewed vigor, as the French drove the Austrians through the defiles of the Tyrol, and entered the plains of Germany. But a few days passed ere Napoleon arrived within sight of the steeples of Vienna. The capital was in consternation; the people demanded peace; the archduke urged it, declaring himself quite unable to protect the city. The Austrian court now implored the clemency of the conqueror, and sent commissioners to Napoleon, at his head-quarters at Leoben, with full powers to settle the basis of peace. The preliminaries were signed at Leoben on the 18th of April, which put a stop to the effusion of blood.

By the election in May of one third of the two legislative bodies, the counter-revolutionists had obtained a majority in both chambers. This exceedingly elated the Royalists. The two Councils now commenced a furious war against the Republican Directory, seeking to overthrow it, and to re-establish, not the old Bourbon despotism, but the constitutional monarchy of 1791. There were now four parties in the field. The old Bourbon party, the friends of constitutional monarchy, the Republicans, and the Jacobins. Three of these parties united against the Directory, each hoping, in the overthrow of the Directors, to establish its own principles. One of the Directors was to leave. The Royalists succeeded in placing Barthélemy, a counter-revolutionist, in his place. The conflict which now arose was whether the Republican Directory should be abolished or maintained. A stern conflict was evidently rising. The Directory headed one party, the two Councils the other. In accordance with the disastrous temper of the times, both parties began to count bayonets instead of votes, that the question might be settled on a field of blood. The emigrants and the priests returned in great numbers, forged passports being transmitted to them from Paris.

The Councils had a legislative guard of fifteen hundred men, and hoped to avail itself of the National Guard, not then fully reorganized. They also placed great reliance on Pichegru, who was treasonably plotting the restoration of the Bourbons. The Constitution did not allow any of the standing army to approach within thirty-six miles of Paris. In defiance of this provision, the Directory, under pretense of sending a fresh expedition to Ireland, assembled twelve thousand veteran troops under the walls of the metropolis. General Bonaparte, aware of the peril of the Directory, and of the danger of the restoration of royalty, had sent the intrepid Augereau to Paris to assist the Directory in any emergency. The Directory was the established government of the nation, and, imbecile as it was, its overthrow by violence at that time could only lead to anarchy and blood.[466]

AUGEREAU AT THE PONT TOURNANT.

At midnight on the 17th Fructidor (September 3d), twelve thousand men, with forty pieces of cannon, were silently marched into the city, and

surrounded the Tuileries. A body of the Legislative Guard was stationed at the Pont Tournant, the entrance-passage to the garden. Augereau approached them at the head of a numerous staff. "Are you Republicans?" said he. The soldiers immediately lowered their arms, and shouted "*Vive Augereau! Vive le Directoire!*" They fraternized at once with the troops of the Directory. The victory was gained; no blood was shed. At six o'clock in the morning, when the citizens awoke, they were surprised to find that a revolution had taken place during the night.

The three victorious directors condemned to banishment their two colleagues, Carnot and Barthélemy, forty-two members of the Council of Five Hundred, eleven of the Council of Ancients, several Royalist agents, and forty-two editors, publishers, and proprietors of counter-revolutionary journals. It is but a wretched extenuation for these deeds of violence, to assert that, had the Councils gained the victory, they would have treated the Directory in the same way. The Directory thus assumed the dictatorship over unhappy, distracted France; but even that was better than anarchy, and almost any thing was better than a return to the old Bourbon despotism.[467] This signal defeat crushed the hopes of the Royalists. The minority of the Councils, who were in the interests of the Directory, were reassembled in the Odeon and the School of Medicine, and with this organization the government attempted to carry on the distracted affairs of the nation.[468]

On the 12th of August Augereau had written to General Bonaparte,

> "Nothing is more certain than that, if the public mind is not essentially changed before the approaching elections, every thing is lost, and a civil war remains as our last resource."

On the 23d of September Napoleon wrote to Augereau, "The whole army applauds the wisdom and energy which you have displayed in this crisis, and has rejoiced sincerely at the success of the patriots. It is only to be hoped, now, that moderation and wisdom will guide your steps. That is the most ardent wish of my heart."[469]

But Napoleon was indignant when he heard of the excessive severity adopted by the Directory. "It might have been right," he wrote, "to deprive Carnot, Barthélemy, and the fifty deputies of their appointments, and put

them under surveillance in some cities in the interior. Pichegru, Willot, Imbert, Colonne, and one or two others might justly have expiated their treason on the scaffold.[470] But to see men of great talent, such as Portalis, Ducoudray, Fontanes; tried patriots, such as Boissy d'Anglas, Dumolard, Murinais; supreme magistrates, such as Carnot and Barthélemy, condemned without either trial or accusation, is frightful. What! to punish with transportation a number of writers of pamphlets, who deserved only contempt and a trifling correction, was to renew the proscriptions of the Roman triumvirs. It was to act more cruelly than Fouquier Tinville; since he, at least, put the accused on their trial, and condemned them only to death. All the armies, all the people were for a Republic. State necessity could not be alleged in favor of so revolting an injustice, so flagrant a violation of the laws and the rights of the citizens."[471]

The Royalists were dismayed by this sudden disaster. The priests and emigrants, who had returned in great numbers, fled again to the frontiers. Those who were advancing toward France retreated back to Switzerland and Germany. M. Merlin and M. François—the one a lawyer, the other a man of letters, and both upright Republicans—were chosen in the place of Carnot and Barthélemy. The guilt of Pichegru was fully established. Moreau, in crossing the Rhine, had taken the papers of General Klinglin, in which he had found the whole treasonable correspondence of Pichegru with the Prince of Condé.

The Directors now pushed the measures of government with Revolutionary energy. The British government, finding themselves deprived of every ally, sent Lord Malmesbury to Paris to negotiate for peace. The British ministry were willing to give up the colonies which they had wrested from France, but would not give up the colonies they had wrested from the *allies of France*, Spain and Holland. It is difficult to see how the Directory, with any sense of honor whatever, could, under such circumstances, have abandoned its allies. Upon this point there was a rupture, and war with England continued to rage.[472]

On the 28th of October the treaty of Campo Formio was signed, which secured peace with the Emperor of Germany. The Directors had sent to Napoleon an ultimatum which would have prevented the possibility of peace. Napoleon boldly rejected their demands, and made peace on his

own terms. The nation hailed the peace with such joy, and Napoleon was now so boundlessly popular, that the Directors did not dare to refuse their ratification. Napoleon was now prepared to return to France. He had established the Cisalpine Republic, and compelled its recognition by the only powers which could endanger its existence. Before leaving Italy he thus addressed this state in the infancy of its freedom:

> "You are the first people in history who have become free without factions, without revolutions, without convulsions. We have given you freedom; take care to preserve it. To be worthy of your destiny, make only discreet and moderate laws; cause them to be executed with energy; favor the diffusion of knowledge, and respect religion. Compose your army, not of disreputable men, but of citizens imbued with the principles of the Republic and closely linked to its prosperity. You have, in general, need to impress yourselves with the feeling of your strength, and with the dignity which befits the freeman. Divided, and bowed down for ages by tyranny, you would not, unaided, have conquered your liberty. In a few years, if left to yourselves, no power on earth will be strong enough to wrest it from you. Till then France will protect you against the attacks of your neighbors; its political system will be united with yours."[473]

The blessings of the Italians were showered upon Napoleon as he departed. As he entered France he was every where greeted with love, admiration, and enthusiasm. His progress through the departments was a triumphal march. In Paris he was received with salvos of artillery, ringing of bells, illuminations, and the huzzas of the multitude. In the laconic address of Napoleon to the authorities of government in their grand reception, he uttered sentiments in perfect accordance with his whole precedent and subsequent career.

"The French people," said he, "in order to be free had kings to combat. To obtain a Constitution founded on reason it had the prejudices of eighteen centuries to overcome. The Constitution of the year III. and you have triumphed over all obstacles. Religion, feudality, royalty, have

successively, for twenty centuries past, governed Europe. But from the peace which you have just concluded dates the era of representative governments. You have succeeded in organizing the great nation whose vast territory is circumscribed only because Nature herself has fixed its limits. You have done more. The two finest countries in Europe, formerly so renowned for the arts, the sciences, and the great men whose cradle they were, see with the greatest hopes genius and freedom issuing from the tomb of their ancestors. These are two pedestals on which destiny is about to place two powerful nations. I have the honor to deliver to you the treaty signed at Campo Formio, and ratified by his majesty the emperor. Peace secures the liberty, the prosperity, and the glory of the Republic. When the happiness of the French people shall be seated on *better organic laws*, all Europe will become free."

Napoleon, having returned to Paris, sought seclusion, laid aside his military dress, and devoted himself with great assiduity to studies of natural and political science. He was chosen a member of the Institute, and took his seat between the distinguished philosophers Lagrange and Laplace. He wrote the following note in acceptance of his election:

> "The suffrage of the distinguished men who compose the Institute honors me. I feel sensibly that before I can become their equal I must long be their pupil. The only true conquests, those which awaken no regret, are those we obtain over ignorance. The most honorable, as the most useful pursuit of nations, is that which contributes to the extension of the human intellect. The real greatness of the French Republic ought henceforth to consist in not permitting the existence of one new idea which has not been added to the national stock."

When subsequently speaking of this period of his life he remarked, "Mankind are, in the end, always governed by superiority of intellectual qualities, and none are more sensible of this than the military profession. When, on my return to Paris from Italy, I assumed the dress of the Institute and associated with men of science, I knew what I was doing. I was sure of not being misunderstood by the lowest drummer of the army."

He was frequently consulted by the Directory on important questions. He had no confidence in the government of the Directory, and only lent it his support so far as to prevent the restoration of royalty. The Directory wished him to take command of a new army, to try to conquer, on the shores of England, a peace with that government which now alone continued the war. With that object in view he visited the coast and carefully scrutinized the resources at command for the invasion of England. He, however, pronounced the project too hazardous, and convinced the Directory that the only vulnerable point which England presented was in India. In accordance with this suggestion a secret expedition was fitted out to invade India by the way of Egypt.

On the 19th of May, 1798, the Egyptian expedition sailed from Toulon. To settle innumerable minor affairs in reference to the Germanic States, a Congress of Embassadors, from Austria, France, and Germany had now for some months been in session at Rastadt. The British government in the mean time vigorously commenced endeavors to ally the monarchies of Europe in a new war against France. It appealed to the fears of all the sovereigns by showing them that the toleration of any republican institutions in Europe endangered all their thrones.

"England," says Thiers, "with a view to foment this fear had filled all the courts with her emissaries. She urged the new king of Prussia to relinquish his neutrality, and to preserve Germany from the inundation. She endeavored to work upon the wrong-headed and violent emperor Paul. She strove to alarm Austria, and offered her subsidies if she would renew the war. She excited the silly passions of the Queen of Naples."[474]

All over Europe war began again to menace France. While the commissioners were negotiating at Rastadt, the armies of the new coalition commenced their march. There was no alternative before them. Principles of liberty were spreading rapidly through Europe; and the despotic monarchs could only maintain their thrones by quenching that spirit in blood. They were compelled either to fight or to surrender. "The monarchs did right to defend their thrones," say the Royalists. "The people did right to defend their liberties," say the Republicans. So long as there are in the world advocates of aristocratic assumption and advocates of popular rights so long will these points be controverted. The Queen of

Naples commenced hostilities, without any declaration of war, by sending an army of fifty thousand men to drive the French out of Italy, in November, 1798. The French armies now crossed the Rhine and entered Germany. The Russian and the Austrian armies were immediately on the move. The French embassadors at Rastadt received orders to leave in twenty-four hours. At nine o'clock in the evening of the 28th of April the three ministers, Debry, Bonnier, and Roberjeot, set out with their families. They occupied three carriages. They had hardly left the town, when, in the darkness, a troop of Austrian hussars rushed upon them, and, dragging the helpless embassadors from their coaches, cut them down in the presence of their wives and children. The ruffians plundered the carriages and carried off all the papers. Debry, though left senseless and supposed to be dead, revived, and, covered with wounds and blood, crawled back to Rastadt. This execrable violation of the law of nations, so unheard of among civilized people, excited the detestation of Europe. War, ferocious and implacable, was again renewed in all its horrors.[475]

ASSASSINATION OF THE EMBASSADORS AT RASTADT.

Every thing was now in confusion, and universal discontent rose up around the Directory. France was distracted by hostile parties, while triumphant armies were crowding her frontiers. All social ties were dissolved. Unprincipled rapacity characterized the measures of government. Religion was abolished and the administration of justice seemed a farce. The laws were disregarded; violence reigned unchecked; intriguing factions succeeded each other, while Jacobins, Royalists, and Republicans were struggling for the supremacy. The people, disgusted with this state of anarchy, were longing for a deliverer who would rescue the government from disgrace and at the same time save France from falling back under the despotism of the Bourbons.

Napoleon, in Egypt, informed of this state of affairs, decided immediately to return to France. He landed at Frejus on the 9th of October, 1799, and traversed France, from the Mediterranean to Paris, through a constant scene of rejoicing. Such universal enthusiasm awaited him, that without the shedding of a drop of blood he overthrew the imbecile government of the Directory and established the Consulate. The nation received this change with almost universal applause. For the narrative of these events and the subsequent career of the Revolution the reader must be referred to the History of Napoleon Bonaparte.

FOOTNOTES:

464. Mémoires de Napoléon, dict. au Montholon et Gourgaud, vol. iv., p. 96, 97.

465. "Unquestionably, sir," replied the duke, "I desire as much as you the attainment of peace for the happiness of the people and of humanity. Considering, however, that in the situation which I hold, it is no part of my business to inquire into and determine the quarrel of the belligerent powers, and that I am not furnished, on the part of the emperor, with any plenipotentiary powers for treating, you will excuse me, general, if I do not enter into negotiation with you touching a matter of the highest importance, but which does not lie within my department. Whatever shall happen, either respecting the future chances of war or the prospects of peace, I request you to be equally convinced of my distinguished esteem."

466. "The Directory became alarmed for their own existence. It had already been ascertained that 190 of the deputies had been engaged to restore the exiled royal family, while the Directory could only reckon on the support of 130; and the Ancients had resolved, by a large majority, to transfer the seat of the Legislature to Rouen, on account of its proximity to the western provinces, whose Royalist principles had always been so decided. The next election, it was expected, would nearly extinguish the Revolutionary party; and the Directory were aware that

the transition was easy, for regicides, as the greater part of them were, from the Luxembourg to the scaffold."—*Alison*, vol. i., p. 491.

467. "We may say that, on the 18th Fructidor of the year V., it was necessary that the Directory should triumph over the counter-revolution, by decimating the Councils; or that the Councils should triumph over the Republic, by overthrowing the Directory. The question thus stated, it remains to inquire, *first*, if the Directory could have conquered by any other means than a *coup d'état*, and, *secondly*, whether it misused its victory."—*Mignet*, p. 338.

468. "Though France suffered extremely from the usurpation which overthrew its electoral government, and substituted the empire of force for the chimeras of democracy, there seems no reason to believe that a more just or equitable government could, at that period, have been substituted in its room."—*Alison*, vol. i., p. 496.

469. Bourrienne, vol. i., p. 250.

470. These men were in constant correspondence with the Bourbons, and were conspiring for their restoration.

471. Mémoires de Napoleon, dict. au Montholon et Gourgaud, vol. iv., p. 233.

"The 18th Fructidor is the true era of the commencement of military despotism in France. The subsequent government of the country was but a succession of illegal usurpations on the part of the depositaries of power, in which the people had no share, and by which their rights were equally invaded, until tranquillity was restored by the vigorous hand of Napoleon."—*Alison*, vol. i., p. 496.

472. Mignet says, "The offers of Pitt not being sincere, the Directory did not allow itself to be deceived by diplomatic stratagems. The negotiations were twice broken off, and war continued between the two powers. While England negotiated at Lille, she was preparing at St. Petersburg the triple alliance or second coalition."—*Mignet*, p. 341.

473. Mem. de Napoleon, dict. au Month, et Gourgaud, vol. iv., p. 271.

The English Tory historians, such as Scott and Alison, denounce France vehemently for refusing to abandon her allies, Spain and Holland, for the sake of peace with England. At the same time they load Napoleon with epithets of infamy for refusing to continue a bloody war with Austria for the sake of protecting an aristocratic and perfidious enemy, Venice, from the rapacity of Austria, an ally with Venice in the unjust war upon France. The remarks of Alison upon this subject are a melancholy exhibition of the power of prejudice to prevent the sense of justice. "Austria," writes T.W. Redhead, "nefariously appropriated the possessions of a faithful and attached ally, while France did but consent to the despoilment of a hostile government, ready to assail her upon the least reverse."—*The French Revolutions*, vol. ii., p. 100.

474. Thiers, vol. iv., p. 334.

475. "Our plenipotentiaries were massacred at Rastadt, and notwithstanding the indignation expressed by all France at that atrocity, vengeance was still very tardy in overtaking the assassins. The two Councils were the first to render a melancholy tribute of honor to the victims. Who that saw that ceremony ever forgot its solemnity? Who can recollect without emotion the religious silence which reigned throughout the hall and galleries when the vote was put? The president then turned toward the curule chairs of the victims, on which lay the official costume of the assassinated representatives, covered with black crape, bent over them,

pronounced the names of Roberjeot and Bonnier, and added, in a voice the tone of which was always thrilling, Assassinated at the Congress of Rastadt. Immediately all the representatives responded, '*May their blood be upon the heads of their murderers*.'"—*Duchess of Abrantes*, p. 206.